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Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 12 April 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le jeudi 12 avril 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Languages in Hansard

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 12 April 1990

The House met at 1000.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr Wildman moved resolution 46:

That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing that difficult financial and trade pressures threaten the viability of Ontario agriculture in 1990 and recognizing that the provincial government must make a significant financial commitment to the preservation, expansion and prosperity of family farming in Ontario in the forthcoming spring budget and recognizing that farmers' economic success in the 1990s will largely depend upon their ability to access and manage required capital resources and recognizing that Ontario farmers experiencing financial hardship would benefit from provincial government financial guarantees designed to encourage lending institutions to engage in mediation rather than foreclosures the Ontario government should reintroduce, this year, a program of interest rate assistance (similar to the OFFIRR program) with sufficient funding and of adequate duration to bring about meaningful farm interest rate reduction in this province and, further, that the Ontario government should enact legislation similar to Manitoba's Family Farm Protection Act to assist farmers facing foreclosures by enabling them to renegotiate manageable credit terms.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Algoma has moved the resolution standing in his name. The member has up to 10 minutes to make his presentation.

Mr Wildman: I introduced this resolution this morning because of the serious financial and trade pressures that are threatening the survival of agriculture in Ontario today, and I believe that the provincial government must make a financial commitment to the preservation and expansion and prosperity of family farming in this budget coming up next month.

Net farm income is projected to decline 6.8 per cent in 1990. This is due to declining cash receipts, increasing operating costs and a significant decline in government payment programs both at the federal and provincial levels. All members will recognize the serious problems facing agriculture because of the so-called free trade agreement with the United States and the current GATT negotiations.

We have all heard the announcement from Ault Foods, for instance, of its problems in competing with processors from south of the border and the need to have the raw product delivered to the processors at prices which are equivalent to the prices in the United States. This problem facing the food processing industry, which I certainly recognize, threatens supply management, and that then is putting further pressure on the prospects for adequate farm incomes, the return on the investment, the management and the labour that all farmers put into their farm operations.

We have these trade pressures on Ontario farming. At the same time the chartered banks' interest rates have reached 14 1/4 per cent. With the coming imposition of the federal

government's goods and services tax, which will almost inevitably have an increasing effect in inflation, we are likely to see the interest rates pushed even higher after the new year. In Ontario already the long-term farm debt is calculated at \$14.7 million, and with the new negotiated shorter renewal intervals for servicing that debt, more and more of the long-term debt is being affected by interest rate changes and fluctuations. At the same time, the estimated short-term debt of Ontario agriculture is approximately \$900 million. So with each one per cent increase in interest rates, the costs of servicing that debt rises approximately \$9 million in Ontario.

Yesterday, the Conference Board of Canada suggested that we are going to face in Canada high interest rates for at least two years. The Conference Board does not predict a decline in interest rates for the foreseeable future. Significantly, the spread between the interest rates in Canada and the United States is also increasing, which puts Ontario agriculture at an additional difficulty in competing in the world marketplace. The spread between US rates and Canadian rates right now is approximately 3.5 per cent. Interestingly, in 1986, when the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program was in force, the spread at that time between Canadian interest rates and US interest rates was only about one and a half per cent.

So we can see that Ontario agriculture is facing a more difficult time today in regard to interest rates than it did at the time when the former government instituted the OFFIRR program and when this government continued the OFFIRR program after it came into power. Surely if the OFFIRR program was required to assist farmers to finance their investments and their operating costs at that time, it is needed even more today.

1010

I note with interest that the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, which carries on an investigation of budgetary policy for this government and for the Legislature each year prior to the spring budget, has recently come down with a report, and one of its recommendations deals with farm finance. That report indicated, as we all know, that farming is very capital-intensive and that farmers are dependent on debt financing and, as a result, are vulnerable to interest rate fluctuations. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture appeared before that committee and requested a short-term program of interest rate assistance.

I note that on page 36 of that report, which has been tabled in the House, recommendation 33 of the committee, which was a unanimous recommendation, reads as follows, "Government should consider a program, similar to the OFFIRR program, that would demonstrate the government's commitment to help farmers in times of high interest rate crisis." That was a unanimous recommendation of members of that committee from all three political parties.

My resolution of course would simply, in the first part of it, implement that recommendation and recommend to the government that it include that kind of assistance program in this year's budget. In its peak year, OFFIRR paid out \$67 million. In my view, any new program should be aimed at lowering interest rates to an effective level of eight per cent for farmers. That would mean that the minimum amount that should be budgeted for a new program should be at least \$50 million,

even though I recognize that at the \$50 million level that would probably not be sufficient to lower rates effectively to eight per cent. But at least we should be looking at \$50 million in this year's budget. I think such a program should be in effect as long as interest rates remain high in Canada, and I believe sincerely that the need for this kind of interest rate reduction assistance is immediate and is necessary now.

The other part of my resolution deals with those hard-hit farmers who face foreclosures. I am proposing that a mechanism be developed, either through legislation or otherwise, which would assist Ontario farmers to benefit from government action to avoid foreclosures. I am suggesting that the government should consider enacting a law similar to Manitoba's Family Farm Protection Act, which would assist farmers in danger of losing their farms to foreclosure.

In my view, the government of Ontario should provide financial guarantees which would encourage lending institutions to engage in mediation rather than foreclosures and should provide a hearing mechanism, if necessary, to enable that process to work. The financial guarantees would amount to \$10,000 annually in guarantees, and this guarantee could be applied to a mortgage, to land leases or to operating costs. These guarantees should be available for up to five years because I believe that the need for protection against foreclosure is going to become more and more serious as interest rates rise and as farmers are faced with these new problems related to trade and the effects that it is having in the marketplace.

I encourage members of the House to look seriously at this recommendation in my resolution and to consider that this is indeed a resolution that is encouraging the government to take action in the Ontario budget.

I also want to indicate to members of the House that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, in its recommendations to the provincial Treasurer as part of the pre-budget consultation process, recommended both of these actions: an OFFIRR-like program to lower interest rates for farmers and protection for farmers facing foreclosure similar to the Manitoba legislation. I would hope that the members will support my resolution. If there is any time left of the 15 minutes for my party, I would reserve use of that at the end to sum up.

Mr Villeneuve: I too am very pleased to rise and support my friend the member for Algoma on his private member's bill. Last October, I brought a private member's bill somewhat similar to this to the Legislature, asking the government to reconsider the lack of priority that it had been giving to the agricultural community. Well, lo and behold, our friends from the New Democratic Party supported my private member's motion, but the Liberal government could not see fit to give agriculture the priority it deserves, or should have, particularly going through these very difficult economic times. I still to this day do not understand it because you cannot talk out of both sides of your mouth continuously, and that is what is happening with this government.

During the time when the member for Huron was Minister of Agriculture and Food, that ministry projected 1988-89 expenditure estimates of \$579 million; actual expenditures were \$522 million. What are they this year? They are \$490 million. Almost \$100 million has been taken away from the province's basic industry, that of agriculture, the one we take for granted. We take food and farmers for granted but do not let them fail, because then the public will rise up in arms. We have had a very marked increase in the Ontario Farm Debt Review Board applications in January 1990. What is happening? Interest rates are climbing and they are telling us that they are going to con-

tinue high for two more years. What we have is a very bad combination: low commodity prices and high interest rates. So what have we got? We have got an increase in applicants to the farm debt review board.

They thought the price of their grains or whatever the commodities they are producing would increase and they also hoped that interest rates would level out. Well, it went in the wrong direction both ways: Interest rates have continued to climb and commodity prices have softened. So we now have farmers going to the farm debt review board to restructure their credit, their repayment schedules, and also to try to organize themselves to put in a crop this year. And it does not look all that bright out there this year.

I can assure members that the cutbacks that this government has seen fit to bring upon the agricultural community are nothing but very shameful. I have, and I will be presenting to the Legislature this afternoon, a petition signed by a number of very concerned farmers regarding the cutback in engineering services, for example, that has been recently announced.

I am going to read part of a letter that I have from a drainage superintendent in eastern Ontario, Peter Addison, who is very concerned as an employee of a municipality and as a farmer and a man who deals with agriculture on an ongoing basis. He writes:

"As usual, eastern Ontario shall be at a very special loss. The elimination of"—and he states the employee's name, our engineer in eastern Ontario—"Mr Glen Slater's job of 23 years serving Glengarry, Prescott, Russell, Stormont and Dundas and beyond is totally incomprehensible. This engineer has assisted farmers on the farm over the years in their designs of farm buildings, ventilation systems, manure systems, erosion control and farm and municipal drainage to name only a few. He has kept abreast of new technology and assisted farmers on the farm to develop the farmer's innovative ideas. Over the years, Glen Slater"—and that could be any one of the 14 engineers, 14 of them, but this is pertaining to one in particular—"has displayed the courage of his convictions and skill by assisting groups of farmers in presenting their ideas to OMAF and the local municipalities. He has proved indispensable to many local municipal councils in both French and English, in the implementation of the municipal drain maintenance program. I am sure these councils shall not take this grim news lightly."

1020

I could continue. However, that is another cutback. The on-the-farm, hands-on, front-line people are being removed and, I guess, replaced by bureaucrats or not replaced at all. The entire budget for the ministry has been slashed by almost \$100 million from what was anticipated two years ago to what is actually being spent this year. So I certainly fully endorse the motion of my friend the member for Algoma.

I hope that this government is now starting to realize the extent of the problem. I know the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and farmers in general are getting to the backbench members of the government and saying: "Hey, what's happening to agriculture? Are you going to do away with our ministry entirely? Are you going to amalgamate it with another ministry? Where do we stand on the list of priorities?" The answer to those is, agriculture stands very low on the list of priorities for this government, and it is proven by the shortsightedness of the reduction in the agricultural budget.

In closing, again I congratulate my colleague the member for Algoma. I and my party will be fully supporting him. I am looking forward to participation in this debate by Liberal back-

benchers to see if indeed the message is starting to come through to them that agriculture is very unhappy with what they are doing to this very special industry.

Mr Dietsch: I rise today to speak on behalf of the farmers of St Catharines-Brock concerning farm interest rate reduction. As a member from the Niagara Peninsula, I have a good understanding and a deep concern for the plight of today's farmers. Since my election I have had, and continue to have, ongoing discussions with the Minister of Agriculture and Food. These discussions focus on the serious challenges that lie before farmers in my area as well as across this province.

Over the past years I have witnessed the mounting pressures facing the agricultural community through the results of unusual weather conditions—the hail storms, the drought—rising production costs, high interest rates, low crop prices and, because of free trade, the reduction of the traditional protection tariffs. It has been predicted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food that there will be annual losses of \$50 million to the fruit and vegetable industry alone due to the free trade agreement. The federal government seems to conveniently ignore the fact that with the signing of the agreement it chose to write off the agricultural industry.

When farmers bare their personal lives and their financial souls for severances for cash flow or when farmers face the refusal of banks to approve new credit, because the banks are looking at cash flow instead of equity as security, we know that if we want to keep families to continue to farm, it must be economically feasible to do so.

Since 1987 I have tirelessly promoted Ontario foods in this very Legislature. I have appeared before the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly to promote usage of food products in this government and this province. I have introduced resolutions in this House which later became a reality, with the promotion of credit cards so that consumers can purchase Ontario fine wines through credit cards and at winery stores on Sunday. I have long advocated strong marketing policies within the public. We have also had wine tastings and meetings with our rural caucus.

Marketing and irrigation, which we are working on, help, but they are not enough. Financial assistance in some form of interest rate reduction is a necessity. In the last four years, the average grower has had to contend with the negative return on gross sales due to the many factors which I have previously outlined while the rest of our region has economic growth. We must not allow our farmers to feed us while they lose their very land or go hungry. If we preserve the farmer, then we will preserve the farm land.

Let me assure members that in the Niagara area my colleagues and I have actively pursued our discussions with the Minister of Agriculture and Food. He has heard from us and placed ministry personnel on the federal-provincial task force. He is reviewing farm programs to put money in the farmers' pockets. But we must continue to work together to assess the challenging financial needs of Ontario's agricultural industry. I am confident that our collective efforts will allow us to arrive at an effective solution, one which will combine financial needs and innovative marketing strategies for the good things that grow in Ontario.

Mr Kormos: I am aghast at being able to follow the member. Some members make bigger impressions on me than others, and those ridings I remember. On the member for St Catharines-Brock and his pitch for the member himself, it would seem that what we saw here was the scripting of an

election pamphlet and not a response to the issue that is before the Legislature this morning by virtue of the motion by the Agriculture and Food critic for the New Democratic Party, the member for Algoma.

What is similarly incredible is that the member for St Catharines-Brock would be so ready to dump blame—and blame is attributable to the federal Tories, no two ways about it—on the federal Tories with apparently the sole purpose being to deflect attention from the inadequate approach and the inadequacies and the shortcomings of the Liberal government in Ontario with respect to farmers.

The one thing that the member for St Catharines-Brock said that indeed was the height of accuracy is how important farming is to the Niagara region. Just as he, who represents people in the northern part of the region, including many farmers, can say that about the northern part of the region, I can tell members that it can be said equally accurately about the southern part of the region, about the area of Welland-Thorold and on into Wainfleet, Wellandport and Fenwick, large areas where farming is of significance, not just currently in terms of food production, but historically. I say that knowing that, for instance, farmers like Art Gill, down in the east end of Welland, have been farming land for many years. He himself has been farming the land that his father farmed decades earlier, land that his children hopefully—and he certainly hopes this—will farm when it comes their time.

At the same time, we have grape growers in the Niagara region who have been deserted by this Liberal government, grape growers who sought relief from the grape acreage reduction program, grape growers who find themselves in dire straits as a result of the state of siege that they, along with other farmers, find themselves in from interest rates, as has been cited, from the type of free trade agreement that the Liberals here at Queen's Park insisted they were going to fight until the free trade agreement was enacted. As was said then and as can be repeated now, you could hear the sound of the towel hitting the floor as the Liberals gave up that fight.

One hears the same thing because one hears the same shallow, hollow, effete promise from the Liberals that they are going to fight the GST. Once again, if that promise has the same validity as the promise to fight free trade, one can expect to hear the sound of the towel hitting the floor come January 1991. One wonders about the real agenda, because we look at a Liberal government here that stands to make big bucks off the federal Tories' GST. In fact, it has been demonstrated on more than one occasion to be, as often as not, in a clandestine sort of way supportive of that same GST program that the federal Tories want to impose on people in Canada and, indeed, in Ontario.

If we can talk for just a moment, please, about the grape growers down in Niagara and about the grape acreage reduction program, it is one where in excess of some 20 grape farmers made application in good faith for subsidization, for funding, for protection under that program. Members should know that the funding was there, and that is to say that their interests were budgeted into the moneys allocated to that program. Their acreage was counted as among that acreage which was to be compensated for as a result of what the federal government and provincial Liberals have done to them by virtue of free trade, among other things. Yet these same 20-plus farmers are being arbitrarily denied compensation under that same grape acreage reduction program.

I tell the members it is not that the funding is not there because, as has already been said, their acreage was counted.

And it is not that there was anything devious taking place, because nobody is arguing the fact that these 20-plus grape growers are being denied compensation under the grape acreage reduction program. Nobody is daring to suggest that they are anything but legitimate farmers, legitimate grape growers who are faced with an incredible economic burden as a result of free trade and the destruction, by both the federal government and the provincial Liberals, of those prime grape lands in the Niagara region and the Niagara Peninsula. The provincial government has got the proverbial short arms and deep pockets when it comes to these farmers. The provincial government talks big but fails to deliver once again.

1030

If the member for St Catharines-Brock spends a whole lot of time talking to the Minister of Agriculture and Food, maybe he would like to remind the minister of the obligation that the provincial Liberals, the provincial government here at Queen's Park, has to those grape growers in Niagara who are being denied compensation under the grape acreage reduction program.

Basically, the minister tells those people: "Sue us. Take us to court." Those same grape growers have agreed to participate, if necessity requires it, in an alternative dispute resolution process. The federal government, which appears far more willing in this instance to live up to its obligations under that program than these provincial Liberals ever would be, is agreeable to participating in that same alternative dispute mechanism. What do the provincial Liberals tell the same grape growers, who are suffering enough as it is? "Sue us. Take us to court. We'll see you in court." Again, these same grape growers know that their chances against the leverage, the power and the finances that the government can muster up, their chances in court, are modest indeed.

We have got Liberals here at Queen's Park saying one thing but doing another. Mind you, the Minister of Agriculture and Food, I suspect with his own agenda, suggests using the Ombudsman. He knows or certainly ought to know, being a minister as he purports to be, that the Ombudsman would not have jurisdiction over a program that entails, among other things, the federal government. The federal government has been so kind as to point that out to the provincial Minister of Agriculture and Food. Hopefully, he understands their particular explanation.

I am proud that the agriculture critic for the New Democratic Party, the member for Algoma, has brought this resolution forward. I know that farmers, not just grape farmers but farmers in the Welland-Thorold area, those farms having been in the possession of families and farmed by families for generation after generation, feel the state of siege that I have indicated farmers are undoubtedly under in this province. It is an industry wherein those same farmers are dependent upon debt financing, and now they face ongoing high interest rates, possibly for the next two years, if not longer.

I look forward to being able to support this resolution on behalf of the farmers of Welland-Thorold. I look forward to seeing the other members of this Legislature show the same empathy and sensitivity towards the needs of farmers as the member for Algoma has in having moved this particular resolution.

Mr McLean: I am extremely pleased to have this opportunity to say a few words to this resolution, because I can identify with the plight of the family farmers in Ontario. I can identify with the current agricultural situation because I have been a long-time dairy farmer in Oro township and many

friends of mine have been struggling to maintain family farms in this province.

This resolution is extremely important and it bears repeating once again:

"That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing that difficult financial and trade pressures threaten the viability of Ontario agriculture in 1990 and recognizing that the provincial government must make a significant financial commitment to the preservation, expansion and prosperity of family farming in Ontario in the forthcoming spring budget and recognizing that farmers' economic success in the 1990s will largely depend upon their ability to access and manage required capital resources and recognizing that Ontario farmers experiencing financial hardship would benefit from provincial government financial guarantees designed to encourage lending institutions to engage in mediation rather than foreclosures the Ontario government should reintroduce, this year, a program of interest rate assistance (similar to the OFFIRR program) with sufficient funding and of adequate duration to bring about meaningful farm interest rate reduction in this province and, further, that the Ontario government should enact legislation similar to Manitoba's Family Farm Protection Act to assist farmers facing foreclosures by enabling them to renegotiate manageable credit terms."

It is a very straightforward resolution.

The story of agriculture in Ontario is the story of growth and change. It is the story of coming together of peoples of diverse backgrounds, beliefs and customs, and the effects the struggle to build and maintain family farms had on them and on the land where they chose to anchor their dream of a better life. But the story of agriculture in Ontario has a sad chapter, and that chapter details the decline of the family farm in Ontario over the past five years because of this government's failure to provide a higher budgetary program priority for agriculture, its failure to consult with farm organizations prior to instituting major program cutbacks, its failure to provide leadership in the promotion of alternative crop uses and its decision to cancel interest rate relief at a time when interest rates have risen and also its reneging on its intention to protect agricultural land and its failure to provide a replacement for the OFFIRR program. That is a sad chapter in the story of the family farm.

Members of this government fail to comprehend that about 30 per cent of our farmers live in financially strained circumstances. They do not understand that poverty is just as much a rural problem as it is an urban one. Our farmers may not be unemployed but, no matter how hard or long they work, they just cannot make ends meet. They fall deeper in debt and lose hope. Our cheap food policy and this government's lack of leadership are neither kind nor just to these people.

In a nutshell, family farmers are part of an economic system that does not treat them fairly. They earn less than the minimum wage, even though they produce something we cannot live without. They produce the food we put on our tables. Yet our farmers would make a decent living if only we paid them fair prices. They would make a decent living if this government would introduce a program of interest rate assistance and legislation to assist those who face foreclosure. Others in the food chain can prosper but not our farmers, and that is an injustice.

We here in Ontario are particularly fortunate to have some of the best agricultural land in the world. Our harvest is bountiful, but most of the time this government tries to take this abundance for granted. It becomes the responsibility of all of us in society and especially this government to collaborate with our farming community to ensure productivity and fair distribu-

tion. This implies that we all do our part to ensure that the inheritors of the good earth can stay on it, can work it profitably and can preserve it for future generations of farmers. Any modern province like Ontario that fails to protect and promote its farm community is heading for some very serious trouble. A province that cannot be reasonably self-sufficient and secure in its production of food risks losing a precious measure of security, independence and prosperity.

I found it rather troubling when I tuned in on the national television station recently and watched the day-long Farm Aid 4. This concert was from the United States and this was the fourth time that major stars in the music industry answered Willie Nelson's call for them to perform on an internationally broadcast program to raise money for beleaguered farmers in the United States. It was noted that approximately 180 farm families fail each and every day of the year in the United States. That is a very sorry state of affairs.

1040

I would certainly be dismayed to see this happen in Canada, and especially in Ontario. Our family farms are extremely important to all of the people in this province. Family farms produce the food we eat, family farms instil traditional values in our youth and I know for a fact that family farmers are more concerned about the protection and preservation of the environment than any corporate farmers would be. Family farms are a valued and integral part of our heritage, our economy and our values in this province.

I would like to spend a few moments providing an example of how this government tends to ignore the agricultural sector in Ontario. In fact, some of my fellow dairy farmers say that their dealings with this government to get low-fat dairy products on the market are so slow that at times it is like pulling a cow through the eye of a needle. In the United States, consumers can buy a growing range of low-fat and low-cholesterol dairy products, but this government is slowing the move to get these same products to grocery shelves in Ontario. Many processors I have talked with complain about Ontario laws that ban butter-margarine blends. This province also prohibits margarines from being the same colour as butter, which I agree with, and while margarine can be mixed with dairy byproducts, including buttermilk, whey and skim milk powder, there is still some question whether processors can promote the fact that their margarine is made up partly of dairy products.

In conclusion, I would like to state quite clearly that the preservation of the family farm in Ontario is not and should not be a partisan matter. It should not be an issue that pits one political party against another. It is of importance to every man, woman and child in this province, no matter what political party he or she supports because, as I said earlier, it becomes the responsibility of all of us in society to collaborate with our farm families and the farming community to ensure productivity and fair distribution. This implies that we all do our part to ensure that the inheritors of the good earth can stay on it, can work it profitably and can preserve it for future generations of farmers in Ontario.

All of us here today have an obligation to support this resolution, because if we fail to protect and promote our farm community, we will lose a precious measure of security.

Mr Riddell: As a farmer and the minister of the day responsible for the introduction of the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program, I rise in support of this resolution asking that a program similar to OFFIRR be reintroduced. In a non-political way, I want to provide some observations about

the farm economic situation in Ontario today and the reasons for my support.

Farmers lost a considerable amount of equity during the last decade as the cost-price squeeze intensified. In the early 1980s, with interest costs soaring above 20 per cent, many farmers were forced to the wall trying to service carrying costs of mortgages and operating credit. In spite of the Ontario farm adjustment assistance program and the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program, which were designed to give farmers a break on interest rates, some eventually gave up farming in despair, while others sought eventual salvation through the Ontario Farm Debt Review Board experience.

Many feel that banking institutions were the main benefactors in these programs, and in many respects they were. Unfortunately, many good young farmers simply had too much debt and not enough return from the agricultural marketplace to cope. Even farm families with one or more off-farm jobs have and are continuing to have a major struggle meeting financial commitments.

As we enter the 1990s, aside from the standard risks and uncertainties associated with farming, there is a gut feeling by some that we may be on the verge of another period of low commodity prices and escalating interest rates. At a recent Royal Bank seminar in southwestern Ontario, senior bank staff were less than optimistic about the farm income picture in the short term as well as in the long term. Forecasters predict that input costs will continue to rise while commodity prices, especially for corn and soybeans, remain below the cost of production.

As well as feeling frustrated, helpless and depressed by poverty-level returns from agriculture, the new wave of consumer demands about food safety and environmental concerns have added new dimensions to the anxiety levels of farmers.

Although there is a desire to reduce debt levels, many are faced with the problem of actually having to borrow to live. At the same time, bankers are tough. Cash-flow financing reigns supreme, while equity lending is a thing of the past. Many find that it is next to impossible to cash-flow a small profit, let alone a decent return to labour, risk and management.

A significant number of Ontario Farm-Start cash crop operators actually lost money in 1989. Therefore, because they cannot make the required \$5,500 income from farming as required by the Ontario Farm-Start program administration, they will not be eligible for their first-year grant of \$11,000 for their 1989 efforts. Now their financial problems will be compounded because bankers are unlikely to extend a line of operating credit.

Many will be forced to seek high-cost supplier credit or rent out their land to established farmers who have little or no debt because they started farming years ago when cost structures were low. More and more farmers continue to seek off-farm employment in order to support their farming endeavours.

Because of external, non-farm economic forces, land market values are considerably higher than agricultural productive values. This makes it very difficult for those wanting to begin or expand farming operations. On the other hand, high land values have bailed out some farmers in financial distress and have been welcomed by older farmers wanting to retire and relocate in an urban area.

The farm debt review board administration reports an increase in activity, and local board panel members sense that with the tough times on the farm, new cases will continue to come up for consideration. Certainly the anxiety level in the farm community is very real. The free trade deal is clearly not

what it was cracked up to be, and the promises about continued protection for milk and feather quotas appear to be in jeopardy. In fact, some futurists predict that marketing boards, as we now know them, will soon be dismantled altogether.

Even those who claim to be eternal optimists, those who in springtime, as the adrenaline surges, get pumped up for another season's promise, are all clearly worried about continuing tough times. The better days ahead, longed for by so many farmers, may be a long way off.

Clearly, a significant number of good farmers are in need of economic assistance and protection right now, before it is too late, and it is for the reasons outlined that I support this resolution, fully cognizant that it is yet another Band-Aid solution to a much longer term problem.

What we need, in addition to improved crop insurance and meaningful long-term stabilization programs, is a federal-provincial lending institution which will lend money to farmers at reasonable rates of interest, subsidized by government, for it is the cost of borrowing short- and long-term credit and servicing debt that is causing much of the despair which I referred to in my opening remarks.

Mr Reycraft: I want to compliment the member for Algoma for the resolution he has brought before the Legislature this morning. I also want to let him know at the outset that I will be supporting it. The resolution is a very timely one, because I am sure that even as this debate is going on in the Legislature, there are farmers in Ontario who are out there negotiating with their banks for operating loans for 1990.

Farmers are finding that this year those negotiations to obtain the operating loans are particularly difficult. There are really two separate issues related to those operating loans. One is the simple availability of credit and the other is its cost. With respect to its availability, farmers are finding that because of low commodity prices, because of the impact of a drought in 1988, and in parts of this province in 1987 as well, and because of rising input costs, it is becoming more and more difficult for them to obtain the credit they need to get this year's crop into the ground.

They are also finding that, for a number of reasons, the cost of credit is presenting difficulties for them. The member for Algoma talked about the prime rate of chartered banks now being 14.25 per cent. That is true. However, I suspect that perhaps by the end of this day 14.25 per cent will look attractive as a prime rate for our chartered banks, because yesterday the Bank of Canada announced that it was increasing its rate to 13.61 per cent, and some have predicted that perhaps even today the chartered banks may be increasing their rates by as much as or more than one half per cent. That means that by the end of the day we may be facing a prime rate of 14.75 per cent.

For that reason, this resolution is timely. It is also timely because this is April and we know that the Treasurer is now considering provisions of the 1990 budget. It is most appropriate that arguments like this one now be made to him.

I am pleased that the member for Algoma has chosen to endorse the recommendation of the all-party select committee, which did recommend as he indicated earlier. Recommendation 33 provided that the government should consider a program similar to the Ontario farm family interest rate reduction program that would demonstrate the government's commitment to help farmers in times of high-interest-rate crisis. This was the first time the Ontario Federation of Agriculture appeared before the finance committee as part of its pre-budget consultation and I am very pleased that the committee, of which I am a member, chose to accede to that recommendation.

I know other members wish to participate in this debate. Let me again compliment the member for Algoma for his resolution and indicate I will take pleasure in supporting it.

1050

Mr McGuigan: I am pleased to join my colleagues in supporting at least the first half of the resolution of the member for Algoma. I cannot, however, support the second half, which says that Ontario should enact legislation similar to the Manitoba Family Farm Protection Act.

First, we should look at the 1934 Farmers' Creditors Arrangement Act and its results. The act gave the courts power to facilitate compromises between bankrupt farmers and creditors in the prairie provinces on debts incurred before 1 May 1935. The legislation resulted in debts on land being forgiven on an average of 35 per cent for land debts and 45 per cent for machinery purchase debts. While it gave some relief to farmers, it had two long-term, ill after-effects. It set farm family against farm family, because the creditors in those days were often farmers, and it effectively removed the banks from the farm lending field until the early 1950s. From 1935 until about 1952, they were removed from the field.

In 1982, Ralph Ferguson, MP for Lambton-Middlesex, introduced a private members' bill to resurrect the Depression-era act. The bill died on the order paper, but many interest groups made representation to the committee about the negative impact of the bill on the supply in terms of agriculture credit. This morning we had the corn producers talking about not only the cost of credit but the availability. The federal government has since introduced farm debt relief review boards without the capacity of imposing court settlements to assist in arrangements between farmers and their creditors.

The Ontario Farm Debt Review Board is very effective in helping financially stressed farmers deal with their lenders in a constructive manner. Ontario supports the efforts of all parties involved in the farm debt review process. Many farm families have used the counselling services provided by OMAF's farm family adviser program to prepare for their board hearings. The federal government has just announced that it intends to increase the flexibility of the farm debt review process. Rather than duplicate the federal Farm Debt Review Act at the provincial level, this process should be supported and developed within the existing framework. The Manitoba act is very similar to the federal Farm Debt Review Act.

I cannot split my vote, but I will support the resolution at this stage with the caveat that I encourage the member to give regard to my comments on the second part of his proposal. At this first reading I will allow my support for a return of an OFFIRR-type program to override my concerns about a Manitoba-type act.

The Deputy Speaker: There is some time left in the official opposition's time.

Mr Wildman: Mr Speaker, I would like unanimous consent to give two minutes to the member for Wellington.

The Deputy Speaker: Agreed?

Agreed to.

Mr J. M. Johnson: I thank the member for Algoma. I would like to first of all compliment him and congratulate him on his amendment. It is an excellent proposal and I hope the members will support it. I would like to compliment the former Minister of Agriculture and Food on his remarks this morning. I think they are very appropriate.

In the two minutes that I have, I would just like to make one point, and possibly it is to the members who represent city ridings. A large number of people in Ontario feel that we should be preserving our farm land, that there is an erosion of the cities on to the farm land and that it is a major problem. It has been going on for many years and it will continue.

One factor that the members should consider is the point that if we preserve our farmers, they will preserve the farm land. When farmers are forced into the position where they cannot make a living, as has been pointed out many times this morning, then it is impossible for them to stay on their land.

We have a case of a young man up in my riding who tried his best to stay on his land. He was forced off the land. He obtained a job in real estate, and in the last two years he made over \$100,000 a year selling real estate. The argument is that he should have left many years ago, but he loves farming; he wants to go back into farming when he can. It demonstrates that the people who have the ability to make livings in many other ways want to work on the farm, and we should encourage them. To encourage them is to provide whatever assistance we can, and the resolution presented this morning by the member for Algoma is a step in that direction.

I encourage all members to support, not part of the resolution, but the whole resolution. Let's all work together to do what we can to preserve our farmers, and they will preserve the farm land.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Algoma will complete the time left for his party and then use up his two minutes at the end.

Mr Wildman: I want to thank all members who have participated in the debate, who have indicated their support for the resolution and who have indicated that they believe it to be a timely one.

With regard to my friend the member for Essex-Kent, I appreciate his position and I recognize that he cannot split his vote. I appreciate his view that our needing an OFFIR-type program overrides his concern about the legislative route as well as part of the resolution.

I just want to point out, though, that the Family Farm Protection Act enacted in Manitoba is not the same as the legislation the member for Essex-Kent was referring to. It does indeed require application to a court and it sets up an advisory board to assist in developing mediation with the lending institutions.

The objects of the act are to afford protection to farmers against unwarranted loss of their farming operations during periods of difficult economic circumstances, to preserve the agricultural land base of Manitoba and to ensure that farm land is farmed and managed during periods of difficult economic circumstances, to preserve management skills of farmers during periods of difficult economic circumstances, to preserve the human resources of the agriculture community of Manitoba and to preserve the existing lifestyle of farm communities in Manitoba and the tradition of locally owned and managed family farms.

I think those objects would certainly be supportable by all members of this House for Ontario and I am not wedded to a particular legislative approach. If the government could come up with improvements to the approach taken in Manitoba for that part of the resolution, I am quite amenable to that.

I also want to thank my friend the member for Middlesex. His observation that it is not only hard to pay for credit is hard to obtain credit for farmers today is certainly correct. If his

prediction that we may see a half percentage point increase in the prime interest rate today is correct, that will mean an additional \$4.5 million in the cost of servicing short-term farm debt in Ontario. There is no question that we need action in this budget.

I particularly want to thank my friend the member for Huron. His experience in the agriculture community and in agricultural policy is well known. I appreciated his sincere approach in his speech and I agree with him completely when he brands this resolution as really a Band-Aid approach. I agree; it is that. I think we are in a crisis situation and we need to take action, but there is no question that this is not the long-term answer for farm finance in Ontario. I agree with him that we need a federal-provincial lending institution that is dedicated to ensuring that family farming can operate at a profit and prosper, not just in Ontario but throughout Canada.

1100

I regret the fact that I must agree with my friend the member for Simcoe East when he says the history of Canada and the history of Ontario have really been a history of the decline of family farming. When he points out that 30 per cent of the farmers in Ontario are in difficult financial straits, that indeed is evidence of a crisis.

I remember that a year or two ago I sat down with a young farmer in my constituency because he was going out of business and he wanted to show me why he was going out of business. We went over his books. He had just recently purchased the farm and he had all the financial problems that all beginning farmers have. He had assistance from various farm programs, but the bottom line, as we went through his previous year's books, was \$10,000. That is what he had, \$10,000, as a return on his investment, his management and not only his labour but the labour of his wife and other members of the family. He just could not support his family on \$10,000.

That is the kind of situation we are facing for young farmers, but the crisis is not just for young farmers today. With the problems we are facing with regard to the so-called free trade agreement and the GATT negotiations, and the pressures they are putting on farmers in Ontario and the future of marketing boards in this province, many farmers, not just young farmers, are going to face this problem. I think we must take action in the short term, in this year's budget, as a way of tiding those farmers over until we can get a properly developed and negotiated federal and provincial approach in this country to assist agriculture across Canada and throughout Ontario.

I appreciate the support that has been voiced by members for this resolution. I hope that in passing this resolution today we will be giving a message to the Treasurer, in his preparations for the spring budget, that we will see a family farm interest rate reduction program included in the budget, that it will have sufficient funding to make a difference and that it will be of the duration required to last throughout the period of high interest rates. Again, I thank members very much for their support.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Brandt moved resolution 47:

That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing the increased incidence of behavioural problems and violence in schools, and recognizing that children in Ontario currently do not have a right to mental health treatment, and recognizing that there are 10,000 children presently waiting for treatment in children's mental health centres, and recognizing that there is a

lack of legislation in Ontario which specifically governs mental health services for children, the present government should make the provision of children's mental health services a government priority and take immediate action to ensure that all children in Ontario are provided the mental health services which they require and deserve.

Mr Brandt: I am not overly pleased to have to bring this motion to the House, because I want to identify what I consider to be an extremely critical problem that I believe very sincerely requires the attention of government.

I do not think there are many members of this House who would disagree with the position I put forward that there are problems in connection with the services that are presently being provided in the field of mental health for children. We may disagree, as we sometimes are wont to do in this Legislative Assembly, on the solutions, but I believe there is reasonable agreement to the extent that we have a difficulty that has to be identified very clearly, one that has to be addressed by the government of Ontario.

The resolution I have put before this House is a fairly general and broad resolution. It has specific implications that I would like to identify in the context of my remarks this morning. But generally, in terms of this particular resolution, what it does is identify the fact that there are children on a waiting list, that there are serious problems relating to the mental health conditions of those children and that government does in fact have a responsibility to provide some services at least to assist in part in overcoming those problems.

The numbers are really quite frightening. Some 10,000 children are presently on waiting lists that range from a time frame of six months to as long as two years. When we are talking about situations that involve child abuse in many instances, the question of incestuous relationships within a family, sexual abuse on the part of some of the situations relating to these children, I do not think there is anyone in this assembly who could justify that these kinds of critical problems can be allowed to fester for a six-month or one-year period or, heaven forbid, a two-year period.

Can you imagine a member of this House, Mr Speaker, meeting a two-, three- or four-year-old child on the street and having that child come up to a member of the Legislative Assembly with a frightened, hurt and frustrated look on his face, saying: "Help me. I'm being abused at home. My father is an alcoholic and he abuses me physically on a regular basis"? You look at the pleading look in this child's eyes and the response of a member of this Legislative Assembly is, "We are going to help you, but come back in six months, come back in a year or come back in two years." These are the kinds of problems, I suggest, that do not have any kind of waiting period that we can allow to occur.

Let me give a specific example. I have read some of the histories of these cases into the record, but these are examples of situations that exist today. A four-year-old girl was the victim of incest and the alleged perpetrator is the father. She has undergone three years of abuse. The response that we have given this child to date is, "You're on a waiting list." This child has spent 75 per cent of her life in a situation that can be described as nothing less than a horror. Yet our only means of extending a hand of support is to say, "Well, maybe we'll be able to help you in six months or a year or two years." That is just not good enough.

The minister's response, when I have addressed this question in the House, is, "Well, we're going to wait for the Maloney report." I want to suggest to the minister that the

Maloney report was not set up in that study specifically to zero in on the question of children's mental health services. So although that may be a satisfying response to the minister, it is not a satisfying response to me.

Second, the minister has indicated, "Well, if we got more money from the federal government under the CAP, the Canada assistance plan, we would be able to provide the help that is necessary." Certainly, if another level of government provided some kind of bailout funding, then maybe the solution would be somewhat easier. But I have to point out, if I might, without being provocative on this particular question, that the CAP was intended for social and welfare services and not for children's mental health services. It does not come under that particular program. It can be used, I suppose, as a convenient excuse, but the reality is again that this is not providing the assistance that is necessary.

I would suggest that children's mental health is not a welfare or social service program, but in fact a health problem. The health of these children is being affected by the living environment they are forced into. A three-, four- or five-year-old child does not have any choice other than to live in a family situation irrespective of how unacceptable that family situation might be. When they reach out with a cry for help from this Legislature, I believe we have a responsibility to respond and to respond as quickly as we can.

1110

I circulated my resolution to a number of agencies within a matter of the last few days. I have not received one negative response yet. Many of them are from ridings that are represented by the New Democratic Party and many of them are Liberal ridings and ridings represented by my own party. Let me read from only one of those letters of support. The director of education for the Kent board of education, in a letter that was dated to me yesterday, said:

"The board supported in principle the resolution as proposed by you, but asked that it go one step further and question the wisdom of the provision of mental health services for children under the umbrella of the Ministry of Community and Social Services instead of the Ministry of Health. Trustees had a great deal of difficulty understanding why children's mental health services"—they recognize it as a medical problem—"is not under the umbrella of the Ministry of Health, which is what they would like to see happen."

The reality is that it should be under the Ministry of Health, and I fully support any efforts on the part of the current minister to make that shift into the appropriate ministry. I see this as a health problem that should come under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, and not as a social service problem of some kind.

In the short time that is left available to me, I want to indicate that there are really three fundamental reasons why the members of this House should support the resolution I am proposing to them today. I would like to suggest to members that the most valuable resource we have in this province and in this country is not our minerals; with all respect to the earlier resolution that was brought before this House, not our farm land; not our energy resources; not our industries; but our children. They are the hope of the future for this province and this country, and money that we spend now in order to correct some of the problems that are going to become even more serious in the future in my view is money well spent.

That gets into my second problem. I believe that this—as a Conservative I say this to members—is really an investment in

the future of our children. If we can stop some of these abuses and these living environmental problems that are unacceptable from happening, if we can offer some form of assistance to these children now, it is my view that we can save tremendous sums of government money in the future by making them productive citizens of tomorrow.

Finally, let me say in the time remaining to me that the Premier indicated he wept at the thought of what had happened at St Joseph's Training School for Boys in the small community of Alfred. That situation, which is supposed to have occurred some 30 years ago and which we talked about in this House yesterday, is one that disturbs, I know, every member of this Legislature.

But it is not enough to weep about a situation that none of us were able to control 30 years ago when we were not here. I do believe there is a responsibility on our shoulders today to do something about today's children. We cannot simply stand idly by and watch these children constantly being exposed to situations that—I do not exaggerate this point—are going to warp their minds and turn them into very confused and very troubled citizens of the future. We cannot stand by and watch that happen when there are things that government can do to correct the problem.

I appeal to the members to support this resolution so that we can get on the road to helping our children of today.

Mrs O'Neill: I am pleased to rise this morning to address the resolution put by the leader of the third party on the important issue of mental health services for children.

Before I begin my more formal remarks, I would like to take it upon myself to try to clear up a confusion that I think the honourable member for Sarnia has placed in this House this morning. He is confusing child protection, which is the responsibility of the children's aid society and this society has the power to apprehend a child in risk, with a child requiring counselling outside the situation of risk. The children's aid society in this province has the resources to provide counselling to children and has the ability to apprehend them. There are no waiting lists for this service; this is the law.

The government of Ontario and the Ministry of Community and Social Services remain strongly committed to the provision of an appropriate response to children who are in need of mental health services. It is critical that we, as legislators, recognize the serious problems that these children and their families are facing daily.

There is a growing recognition that to effectively serve children with special needs, we will be required to approach the challenge with the co-operation and collaboration of services that are the responsibility of several ministries. The newly formed interministerial committee on services to children and youth consists of senior officials from the ministries of Community and Social Services, Health, Education, Tourism and Recreation, and Correctional Services. This committee has a strong mandate to ensure the establishment of a co-ordinated and integrated in-service mechanism, and to ensure effective practical solutions at the local level or field level where the individual mandates of the different ministries may now be impeding the most efficient delivery of services to the children of Ontario.

The first meeting of this new committee with this exciting and challenging mandate was held on 4 January 1990. I believe that with this gathering of key providers we now have a regular meeting ground for the essential discussion that will lead to full review and reform.

There are already many examples of local collaboration among children's mental health service providers. The northern initiatives for children with special needs project is restructuring services for children in northern Ontario. This project will ensure that health and social service providers, as well as educators in the north, plan and work together regularly.

In the Ottawa-Carleton region, service providers from several organizations have also been meeting to discuss ways of more effectively delivering available services in that region.

In the important area of policy, the lead Ministry of Community and Social Services, children's services division, is addressing mental health issues for children. The Advisory Committee on Children's Services has been asked to identify the requirements of an adequate children's service system in this decade and beyond.

The Ontario Association of Children's Mental Health Centres and other service providers are participating in this review. This association represents 90 of the children's mental health centres in Ontario and receives an annual grant from the Ministry of Community and Social Services to assist in its administrative costs.

Needless to say, we are not yet satisfied that children's mental health care is provided as quickly as we would like it in every instance. I think it is quite clear, however, that over the past few years the Ontario government has made a significant effort to improve the whole children's service sector.

This commitment was further manifest in last week's announcements by the Minister of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Health that transfer payment agencies under their jurisdiction will be receiving a 5.5 per cent increase in their respective budgets. This represents an increase in dollar terms of \$18.6 million above inflation.

Changes in the designation of the majority of children's mental health service centres have permitted federal cost-sharing of services under the Canada assistance plan, but as a result of the most recent federal budget a cap has been placed on this funding source, resulting in a projected shortfall to the Ministry of Community and Social Services of \$160 million. Of this total, \$34.5 million will be lost to Ontario's community mental health resource network for children with special needs. This is serious. Waiting lists will certainly not be made shorter through any help from these federal government cutbacks. We all know that waiting lists are significant, and they are a great concern to the Ministry of Community and Social Services and to this government.

1120

If I may say a word about these waiting lists, mental health services for Ontario's children are decentralized and are delivered by many agencies. It is therefore sometimes very difficult to determine the number of children waiting for services and then to determine whether the services that they await will be appropriate to their needs. The Ontario Association of Children's Mental Health Centres and other service providers are working carefully to locally develop a means of identifying children in urgent need and, once identified, to ensure that the services they receive are indeed the best for their particular needs.

Children's mental health services must constantly be prioritized and allocated to children whose need is the greatest. This is a challenge we face in every area of health care, but for children with special needs the call is very clear. The Ministry of Community and Social Services is co-operating and using the most up-to-date technologies to develop accurate data con-

cerning those children on waiting lists and continues to work with children's mental health professionals to assess developments in treatment and ways to ensure the effective use of professional services.

There are currently 100 mental health centres devoted to children's needs in Ontario, providing services to a case load of approximately 30,000 children at a cost of \$142 million in the fiscal year 1988-89. These children's mental health centres provide a wide range of services: residential and day treatment, psychotherapy and counselling, early intervention and outreach and prevention activities. Three of these agencies are in my home city of Ottawa—the Centre for Educative Growth is in my riding of Ottawa-Rideau and the Child Study Centre and the Roberts Smart Centre are in Ottawa-Carleton—and we in the Ottawa-Carleton Liberal caucus have met as recently as December 1989 with these providers to hear their concerns.

In addition to the services these agencies provide, Ontario's public hospitals offer several different kinds of services to children with special needs; 20 public hospitals receive health funds specifically designated for children's outpatient service. The Ministry of Health also funds psychiatric inpatient units for children and adolescents in hospitals in three major centres: Victoria Hospital in London, the Hospital for Sick Children and Sunnybrook Medical Centre in Toronto and the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa. Provincial psychiatric hospitals in London, Whitby and St Thomas also operate adolescent programs whose salary component is funded through a purchase-of-service agreement with the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

In addition to these specialized programs, general and psychiatric hospitals often provide services to children with mental health problems through emergency departments and family service programs.

The Minister of Community and Social Services and his staff continue to be actively involved in discussions with representatives from the Ontario Association of Children's Mental Health Centres to find positive solutions to these issues and the issues that I have identified and that we are all aware of. I believe that all these ongoing initiatives indicate clearly the concern of and commitment by the government of Ontario and the Ministry of Community and Social Services to children needing mental health services in this province. The continuing efforts to develop an effective and comprehensive and responsive service system continues. We in the government realize there are great needs. We realize that we have not accomplished the task, but we are certainly trying, willing and able to do so, with the co-operation of the providers in the field. That task we have begun actively and will continue to pursue on a daily basis.

Mr Allen: I gather we have 15 minutes to share among the members of this party, in which case I will be taking a little over half of the time and my colleague the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore will be speaking to the rest.

I rise with great interest in this resolution, which I support wholeheartedly. I commend the member for Sarnia for bringing it forward. I have noted his recent questions in this House in this regard, which I was questioning the minister about over the last year or so myself. I note that he has introduced a refinement to his resolution almost implicitly in his remarks, which is that he does think the services that the children's mental health centres provide should be transferred back to the Ministry of Health and away from the Ministry of Community and Social Services. I do not read that in the resolution, and I am not

committed to that solution when I speak in defence of his resolution.

I want to say that there certainly is a great deal of evidence that there is not only a great impact of the violence of our times—whether it is measured in family terms, in community terms, in television and media terms or international terms—upon our children; the evidence is there in stories that one reads in papers like the Toronto Star and others, "Teen Violence a Growing Menace." What was happening at the Lakeshore Collegiate Institute was "a drama of horrified classmates watching a young group enter the school with broken bottles and attacking students," and so on through a number of incidents. The article goes on to affirm that the majority of kids are really great and all-together students, but the symptoms are there.

I look at a recent report from the city of Windsor and the county of Essex on the whole question of children's services. One of the concluding remarks is that there is a definite belief that mental health problems among children and young adults are increasing in Windsor and Essex county. So it is not just in the big city; it is in the medium-sized city and it is in the surrounding counties as well. This group in Windsor-Essex is extremely concerned about the facilities that are available for the treatment of those young people.

I myself have received over the months numerous letters pointing out the problems that we have in the delivery and the availability of service, the problems afflicting children's mental health treatment centres around the province. One, for example, is from a lawyer who specializes in work with those children, a man by the name of Stephen Biss writing in Toronto, relaying to me some of the correspondence that he has had with the predecessor of the Minister of Community and Social Service, the member for Kitchener-Wilmot, and arguing that new funding was absolutely critical for the children's mental health centres and, in spite of the fact that in 1987 the member for Kitchener-Wilmot promised such funding, there was no evidence of it in the subsequent months after 28 April 1987. He writes:

"Two years have now passed, and I am not aware of any new children's mental health placements in Peel for such severely troubled and acting-out adolescents. My child clients who fall within this category continue to be placed far outside Peel. Long waiting lists remain the rule. "Such clients who begin involvement with the courts under the Child and Family Services Act often quickly become young offenders with resulting damage to their lives, to their parents' wellbeing, to victims of crime and to the community."

The story goes on, not only from an advocate who is a lawyer but from a worker in the field, a Ken Westlake, who writes from another one of the children's mental health centres, this time in Windsor.

I have correspondence from the Earlscourt Child and Family Centre in Toronto, more than one letter. They tell me of the problem that they are facing in resolving their priorities as they try to service a very large waiting list and at the same time reach out into the community, unfortunately having to put to one side projects that they would want to undertake and leaving the servicing of many children on their lists for months on end. One of those letters from the Earlscourt centre reads, in part, as follows:

"In a recent publication of the Canadian Council of Children and Youth, 'Safer Tomorrow Begins Today,' research is presented that draws correlations of parental conflict, poor parenting and troublesome behaviour in children with future criminal and delinquent activity. It would seem obvious to most

reading this report that putting a priority on resources in treating these problems would be an excellent approach to preventing the negative outcomes resulting from no or minimal intervention. Currently, this could not be a priority of governments. Otherwise, why would only \$3,400 be spent in Ontario on children's mental health...versus \$47,000 per convict per year in Canadian jails?"

1130

Prior to the rising of this Legislature just before Christmas, I released a statement trying to cover the major elements of this issue as they had come to me over previous weeks and months. I noted at that time the extreme waiting lists that young people and their families are facing as they try to seek help which is severely needed at children's mental health centres. I noted, for example, that at the Beechgrove Children's Centre in Kingston they had been lined up 430 deep in the past year and that in Windsor the number was 445, that across the province a demonstrated total of 6,000 are on confirmed waiting lists, and probably another 4,000. When the government member who just spoke questioned those waiting lists, she did not of course even take time to reflect on the numbers of children out there who desperately do need help who go beyond these actual waiting lists.

Stress and frustration in these centres is taking a heavy toll on staff. At the time I was speaking prior to Christmas, one of those centres was on strike and another one has since been on strike for nine weeks up at Geneva Park. The Minister of Community and Social Services, in answer to repeated questions, kept replying that more money had been spent recently, but when you talked with the mental health centres themselves, they asked the minister to provide evidence that that was indeed the case, because they saw no change—and so on and so on. The problems that they face in terms of staff turnover arise from the low levels of funding that the centres receive. The child and youth workers, for example, can earn 6 to 45 per cent more money elsewhere. Professional staff can get from 5 to 7 per cent more in social service agencies, 12 to 17 per cent more in Ministry of Health-funded bodies and 28 per cent more in school boards. So there is a massive problem of staff turnover in this as in so many other community social services.

While the Ontario Association of Children's Mental Health Centres has been calling this issue to our attention—for weeks and months now, it has been issuing the Children's Mental Health Advocate on a regular basis, detailing the problems that afflict it and its clients—it does not see the necessity for more studies. It is true the Maloney commission is out there, and Mr Maloney is a sensitive observer and he will undoubtedly provide an excellent report, but the minister already has the Heseltine report of three years back, which made a series of very specific recommendations, none of which appear to have been followed up.

There are several levels to this issue, and I would like to have time to go into them, but I do not. There is the treatment versus the care question. It is not at all clear that simply transferring these centres back to the Health ministry, where they were once, and leaving the Ministry of Community and Social Services is in itself a particularly helpful solution.

It seems to me that health and social services, the social setting of health problems, creates a single continuum and the decision that was made a few years ago under the Child and Family Services Act to combine them was a good one. But what got lost in the process was the guarantee of universal care and treatment for these young people in children's mental health

centres so that if you were ill for mental and emotional and behavioural reasons, you had at least as much of a guarantee that you would be treated immediately and promptly as you would if you were physically ill as a child.

We all know that a child who is physically damaged can be taken to a medical clinic or a hospital and receive immediate treatment. That is not the case with these equally severe or even more severe traumas that afflict young people who come out of violent situations. As a result, the problem that we face is a severe one and the leader of the third party is certainly correct that this needs to be a very high priority for this government to face when it looks at the whole problem of children's services and the needs of our children in our society.

With that, I wish to depart the debate and leave the balance of this party's remarks to the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore.

Mrs Cunningham: It gives me a great deal of pleasure and somewhat of an honour to speak to the resolution of the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

I would like to start by saying that I hope this resolution in fact will get the support of the government members in this House, and I say this very directly and to the point: Children's mental health services across the province of Ontario are right now in extreme difficulty. It may have to do with changes in legislation in the past, it may have to do with a lack of funding, it may not perhaps be the direct responsibility of the government, but it is certainly a direct responsibility and related to the problems in society today.

The kinds of children who were on waiting lists some five years ago were very different from the kinds of children who are there now. They are children who are being referred with very severe mental health problems. They are children who in the past may have been ignored, or as we were trying to find a way to treat them and serve them through school systems and through hospitals and through medical doctors, we have come to the conclusion that children's mental health institutions are best able to do that because they have the kind of staff, but the lineups are real, and all this resolution does is to ask the government to recognize that there really is a serious problem in Ontario today. I would hope that this is the kind of recognition we are going to get. That is the intent of the member for Sarnia: Put it higher up on the list of priorities. I would think that would be a very high one with this government.

We do respect, in fact, the commission that is looking at health services across the province as they relate to the treatment of children, and that is Dr Colin Maloney and his work. However, we should also know at the same time that the Ontario Association of Children's Mental Health Centres, which is very much aware of the mandate of that commission, understands truly that it will not be dealing with the crises.

The crises are this very long waiting list, some would say over 10,000 children. Those children who are being dealt with first are children who are suicidal. We used to look at routine matters, routine cases, if members can believe it, waiting maybe three or four weeks just five years ago. Now we have those routine cases, if members can imagine their children being referred for mental health support being considered routine at all, being asked to wait some six or seven months. This is serious business.

In school boards across the province, there used to be an opportunity to create more section 25 facilities, but with the introduction of Bill 82, our boards are very much concerned about creating more of those facilities, because they are not quite certain what their role is in the delivery of mental health services and what the role of the children's mental health as-

sociations really is. There are some 85 agencies they can turn to, but they used to create these special schools and work with the agencies. But there is confusion as to who has what jurisdiction. Right now in Ontario there is a real need to get at that legislation and clarify the mandate. Right now under the Education Act school boards in fact cannot buy those services. They should be buying the services, because the mental health people are the best able to deliver the kinds of services that are necessary, but they are confused as to who should do it.

This big issue in the province is not part of the mandate of the Maloney commission. All that the children's mental health centres are asking for is that the government recognize that problem, that roadblock, create another separate commission to deal very quickly with legislative changes and mandates and to do it immediately. They could do this within months by establishing a commission by order in council. It is a very specific request that they are asking for.

At the same time, they should have an advisory committee that could advise the minister directly as to the real legislative concerns, program concerns and concerns around waiting lists.

1140

I heard the government representative speak today of the amount of money that is going in, and I can tell the minister right now that as we take a look at responses from places such as the Beechgrove Children's Centre in Kingston, Ontario, where the chairman of the board took the time on 15 March to write a letter to the area manager of the Ministry of Community and Social Services; very specifically, the first paragraph of that letter is this:

"Although our 1990-91 service plan and budget is not yet finalized, it is evident even at this point that the result of the increase in provincial funding being held to 4.5 per cent"—that is the provincial funding that is going in; maybe 5 per cent but 4.5 in this case—"will result in a reduction in mental health services Beechgrove provides to children and families of southeastern Ontario."

This is all of southeastern Ontario. Need I talk about the services at Madame Vanier Children's Centre in London, Ontario, where the same kind of letter will probably be presented and where a member of the board wrote not too long ago to the minister to say:

"I've been here for a number of years and it is not often that I would write a letter to the Minister of Community and Social Services. But I can tell you right now that we have got real problems in the delivery of services in this institution, and since I have been here a long time, I can tell you that we used to look at waiting lists, but they were for children that in fact were being served in some way elsewhere and right now they have nowhere to go."

As I heard the representative of the government today speak about adolescent services, surely the members of this House know across the province, and we have known it for a long time, that there is a serious shortage of mental health services for teenagers in Ontario. All of us in our job in 130 constituency offices across this province, day by day, have members of families coming and asking if we can help get their young children mental health services. There is a severe shortage of adolescent psychiatrists across this province. Everyone recognizes it. We cannot get young people to go into that field of medicine. How could anybody stand up in the House today and assume things are okay?

All this motion is doing is saying to recognize that there is a problem and then to get on with it. That is all it says, and I

cannot believe that it could be interpreted in any other way. We will be circulating this motion and we will let the public of Ontario know what the government is doing. If they vote against this motion, I can tell members one thing, as a sincere member who wants to be part of the public discussion in this province and who has worked in children's mental health services for the last decade: it will be because of sheer ignorance or arm-twisting that anybody could vote against this motion. We are only asking for recognition of a serious problem and letting the agencies know that we are all on side and that we are going to try to do something about it together. That is all it is about.

Let me tell members about linkages to education, as a former school board trustee who used to be able to help refer these children to agencies. Right now the Education Act prohibits boards from purchasing services except from other school boards. There is a really difficult problem in legislation, and that is why the children's mental health associations want a commission established immediately, so that the real linkages between health, education, corrections and the Ministry of Community and Social Services can be dealt with.

I will close by saying that there is a crisis in the delivery of children's mental health services across the province. There is simply not universal access. A child's mental health problem is something that has to be dealt with immediately. There should be no waiting lists. There are other ways of helping these families. The legislation does not allow us to do it. The transfer payments are not helping. In fact, they are reducing the quality and the level of service. That is a problem for all of us, but I would not want to see anyone vote against the recognition that we have a problem that we should be solving together.

Mr Keyes: I am pleased today also to speak to the resolution brought forward by the honourable member for Sarnia regarding the provision of children's mental health services in Ontario because it does provide me with a few moments, all too briefly, to show how the government remains strongly committed to the provision of appropriate services to children who require mental health services.

This government's commitment to providing this service system has been demonstrated over and over again in our recent accomplishments, funding which was referred to earlier by the honourable member for Ottawa-Rideau. The amount of \$120 million in 1985 was increased to an estimated \$188 million in this current year. In the same period, annual funding for children's mental health centres has grown from \$85 million to \$112 million. Even after an adjustment, this represents an actual enrichment of some \$18.5 million for these services.

On 6 April the Minister of Community and Social Services announced an enhancement to funding of these agencies of an additional one per cent, which will result in an additional \$20.6 million for community agencies, including children's mental health agencies. For example, the honourable member for London North referred to my own area of Kingston and The Islands. Our Beechgrove Children's Centre will receive an additional \$52,000 as a result of this recently announced one per cent enhancement, which will help significantly to address that centre's expressed concerns regarding increased costs from pay equity and the employer health tax.

The ministry also released a report in January 1988 entitled *Investing in Children*. The directions given in that particular report were based on research and extensive consultation with service providers and other professionals. The report indicated that all of our work and service should have a dual focus: first, on the evaluation or the prevention and the earliest possible

intervention, since these services promise to be the most effective and, second, on seriously and chronically disturbed children through the continued development of a responsive and co-ordinated services system.

In November 1989 the Minister of Community and Social Services released a report entitled *Better Beginnings, Better Futures*. A co-ordinated group of 25 prominent educators and researchers, community workers etc, reviewed and evaluated not only the literature but also 45 Ontario prevention programs for disadvantaged children. As a result of that study, the three ministries of Community and Social Services, Health and Education have initiated a major research demonstration project to test the effectiveness of primary prevention in services to children at risk.

They have committed some \$3.5 million for each of five years to support services to children and families that address the whole range of their physical and social needs. They have addressed it to support those with high-quality programming, tailored to community needs. As the minister announced in the House in November, we will be launching six such community projects across the province during this coming summer. The Minister of Community and Social Services also committed continuing funding over the next 25 years for research and evaluation of the program's effectiveness.

In terms of the resolution to which I am speaking today, I must disagree strongly with the honourable member's statement that the government is not dealing with the issue of children's mental health. Children's mental health centres are publicly funded and are accessible to everyone, contrary to what the honourable member would attempt to have this House believe. We are working with these centres to address the issue of waiting lists.

The government is also in the process of examining and refining the current legislation. We are working in conjunction with the various groups of professionals who work in this field to evaluate current programs, extend these programs, add new ones where necessary and review the issue of comprehensive legislation. We recognize that there is an increasing demand for such services and that there is never enough money to do as many things in this province as we want to do in any ministry of government. But we also recognize that there are children in our communities who desperately need our help.

This government has made children's mental health a priority since coming to office in 1985 and will continue to treat it as such. These concrete efforts demonstrate our commitment to children who need services for their mental health. For that reason I will not be supporting this resolution as presented today.

1150

Mrs Grier: Unlike the representatives of the government party, I am very proud and very pleased to support the resolution that is before us today. We have heard a great deal of justification and explanation of what the government is doing and an assertion from the member for Kingston and The Islands that in fact children's mental health is a priority for this government.

There are almost 10,000 children on waiting lists for mental health care in the province. If mental health care for children is a priority, I cannot understand how that figure exists. When I hear other representatives of the government boast about how the government is developing data to prioritize the needs of the children on waiting lists at these centres, I am appalled.

If a child is on a waiting list for a mental health centre, that child has a need. Surely it has to be the priority of all of us, whether we are members of the Legislature, whether we are parents, whether we are grandparents, whether we are just human beings, that a child in need and a child in crisis is a priority and has to receive the help he or she requires.

The government says how much more money it is spending. Let me point out that the \$20 million in extra funding, if it is allocated for mental health centres, in my community of Etobicoke alone might provide for four centres—we already have three—might serve another 1,000 children. There are currently 2,535 children in my community of Etobicoke, with a population of 300,000, whose social, emotional and behavioural needs are not being met. So I will take that \$20 million, put it in Etobicoke and then the province can worry about all the other communities. If that is what is going to happen, they are not meeting the needs.

Co-ordinating committees, moves from one ministry to another, health councils and meetings to discuss practical solutions—we have been talking about all that for decades. The government could have all the discussions, conferences and forums to discuss how to meet the needs. If they do not have the money to provide the services, none of that amounts to improving the situation. The costs of this underfunding are severe in the families and the children affected. There is a waiting list of up to 10 months in Etobicoke for service, and every day of delay makes the problem worse.

The majority of the members of this Legislature, I suspect, are parents and I suspect very many of them have gone through a period in their own families when one of their kids was being a problem. Members know the stress that puts upon a family. Just think of the stress it puts upon the workers in those centres. The centres are underfunded, the case loads are too big and that results in a turnover of workers, in much greater stress and burnout and in inadequate service in those centres, let alone the inability to serve the need that is out there. The cost of not acting is so high to society as a whole, let alone to the individuals and to the families.

The Ontario Association of Children's Mental Health Centres estimates the cost at being \$3,400 per child who needs help. If that child does not get the help and ends up in our criminal justice system, we will all be paying \$47,000 a year to support perhaps that child in one of our criminal institutions. If ever there was an argument for prevention on economic grounds, surely that was that.

But the argument for prevention is not just on economic grounds, it is on human grounds. As a society, surely we are going to be known by how we treat our children, how we protect our children. To have jurisdictional squabbles as to which ministry is responsible or whether the children's aid is in fact responsible is not good enough. The children of this province have got to be a priority.

It is obvious from the fact that government members are not going to support this resolution today that the mental health of the children of our province is not a priority for this government, and that is shocking.

Mr Eves: I, for one, am not convinced that all government members are going to oppose this resolution in the House this afternoon. I would certainly think that it is in the best interests of the government and everybody in Ontario to support a very important resolution dealing with the health and wellbeing of Ontario's children, who are certainly our most valuable resource.

I am sure we are all aware that one in six children is emotionally disturbed. I am sure we are aware that mental health problems account for a greater proportion of hospital days than medical problems for individuals between the ages of 15 and 20 years of age in Canada. Suicide ranks as the second major cause of premature death for individuals between the ages of 15 and 20 years in Canada.

From my own personal experience in my region of the province, mental health services are not as accessible as we would like. It is exemplified by the 10,000 children waiting for mental health treatment in children's mental health centres across the province. There are waiting lists in hospital treatment centres and there is a shortage of child psychiatrists, especially in northern Ontario.

The seriousness of this problem is magnified by the fact that at least 10 per cent of those waiting for treatment over one year are considered critical cases. Examples of critical cases are children physically and sexually abused and cases which involve suicide and fire-setting.

The District of Parry Sound Child and Family Centre in 1989 had to put 179 children on a waiting list for treatment. The centre has had much difficulty retaining staff because salaries are much lower than those in the health sector. Concordia Center in North Bay currently has a waiting list in excess of 60 children, and over the past three months has not been able to accept one single more child for treatment. But this is not just a regional problem; it is indeed a province-wide problem.

For the minister's and the government's part, they seem to be prepared to rely on the Maloney report, the special advisory committee on children's services, before they take action. Alex Thomson, who is the president of the Ontario Association of Children's Mental Health Centres, says that Mr Maloney has spent exactly two hours in the last 17 months of his investigation talking to mental health professionals. I do not think that is sufficient.

I would like to finish by quoting from a document, *Achieving Our Potential Together*—a corporate plan, put out by the Ministry of Community and Social Services in January 1990. On page 9 the minister says, "The government has made a commitment to accessibility that strives to make all services reasonably accessible to residents in all areas of the province."

If the minister truly believes what he says, and all members of the House believe in that, I think we will vote for this resolution today, because I think we all have a responsibility to ensure that all the children in Ontario have access to mental health services.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Cureatz): Continuing the rotation, I want to check with the Clerk's table. Do we have time left?

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: I realize the honourable member has placed a resolution, but has time expired for all the parties? I believe it has.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Yes, it has. Fine. Then concluding remarks by the honourable leader of the third party.

Mr Brandt: I appreciate very deeply the indications of support from some of the speakers who have addressed the question of children's mental health services in this province.

I drafted this particular resolution because of the indications of growing problems in our society that I believe very sincerely

have to be faced head-on by this Legislature. These problems are not problems that are going to go away without our attention. They are not problems that are going to reduce in magnitude as a result of our simply ignoring the realities of what is going on in our schools and in our homes and across society in Ontario. They are problems that I believe we have a responsibility to do something about as quickly as we can.

1200

Let me just for a brief moment address the question, since it was raised by the government members, of the amount of financing that is being made available and some of the increased funding to this particular program, and I appeal directly to the government members when I raise this particular issue.

It has been said that a 5½ per cent increase has been given to this area of government undertaking. I agree. We have no dispute with respect to that particular number. Where we do have a dispute, however, and where government members should search their souls in connection with this particular matter, is that this government has imposed on these agencies two very costly programs which they have no way of funding, since their sole source of revenue, as members well know, is the government of Ontario—namely, the employer health levy and pay equity.

I do not take issue with pay equity and I do not take issue necessarily with the government's right to impose a new tax. The fact of the matter is, I disagree with the tax. But the reality is, the government has performed some fiscal sleight of hand. It has taken with one hand and given a little bit with the other, and then it holds out this great promise of saying, "Well, we are going to give you five and a half per cent." That is intellectually incorrect and members know it. It is just wrong, and it is morally wrong because the amount of increase—

Interjections.

Mr Brandt: I am glad I finally got the attention of the government members, because I hope they wake up to the fact that the waiting lists as a result of reductions in the staffing of these agencies, the closing of some of these agencies that are providing these services, are extremely troubling problems that I believe this Legislature has to stop. We are looking at waiting lists of 10,000, as we have already indicated today. Those waiting lists are going to grow. They are going to become even more troubling and increase in size.

Apparently in my own area, as an example, according to the director of the agency that looks after these services in my riding, if the government-imposed programs are taken into account with the very limited amount of funding that the government is going to provide by way of an increase, they have to reduce their staffing by three or four people. I indicated an agency the other day that has some eight different locations in which it operates. Two or three of those are going to have to close down as a result of inadequate funding. It is not a question of the money being adequate, because it is not. The imposed costs on the part of this government are causing serious problems to these agencies.

I ask simply that members support this resolution, give a priority to children's mental health services in this province. We have to move now.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Wildman has moved resolution 46.

Motion agreed to.

1210

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The House divided on Mr Brandt's motion of resolution 47, which was agreed to on the following vote:

Ayes—46

Adams, Allen, Brandt, Breagh, Brown, Bryden, Campbell, Carrothers, Cooke, D. S., Cousens, Cunningham, Dietsch, El-

liot, Epp, Eves, Farnan, Faubert, Fawcett, Furlong, Grier, Hampton, Jackson, Johnson, J. M., Kormos, Laughren, Leone, Martel, McGuigan, McLean, Morin-Strom, Nicholas, Oddie Munro, Owen, Philip, E., Pollock, Rae, B., Ray, M. C., Reville, Riddell, Roberts, Runciman, Sterling, Tatham, Velshi, Villeneuve, Wildman.

Nays—5

Daigeler, Keyes, Patten, Smith, E. J., O'Neill, Y.

The House recessed at 1215.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1330.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PLANT CLOSURES

Mr Farnan: The Peterson Liberals are no friends of working men and women.

TAG Apparel employed 1,250 persons in Woodstock, London, Toronto and Cambridge. Last summer, management at TAG realized that in order to stay in business and keep much-needed jobs in these communities, changes were going to have to be made. Management and the union, the Textile Workers, agreed to make concessions and sacrifices. As a result, they hoped to keep the company afloat.

On 27 February, three working days before the employees and their advisers were to meet with the bank to outline their plans to save the company, the receivers were sent in. Since that time, it has been announced that all plants owned by TAG Apparel will close.

The 1,250 employees of this company took wage and benefit cuts in order to save their jobs. There were offers to buy these companies as operating entities, but they were ignored. This Liberal government could have assisted in restructuring, but preferred to sit on the sidelines and watch these jobs go down the tube.

In cases where employees of companies in financial difficulty have a specific plan to save the operation, surely the government has an obligation to assist these employees. If the government had said to the bank and the receiver, "Hold it, let's look at the alternatives," we would not have 1,250 people losing their jobs.

Even in closing, the Liberals are not friends of the workers. When it comes to wages, severance and vacation pay, the employees are left without protection—protection that this Liberal government could have legislated long ago but has failed to do so.

GERRY CROWE

Mrs Marland: As the spokesperson for people with disabilities, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to congratulate Gerry Crowe, Mississauga's Multiple Sclerosis Person of the Year for 1990.

In 1983, Gerry helped organize an MS self-help group in Mississauga, and he has been a key individual in keeping the group active. Meetings are held in his home and provide a warm, caring atmosphere for members and their families.

A positive mental attitude is of prime importance for persons with MS, and phone contact among members helps to reinforce that attitude. MS is usually harder on spouses and families than on the person with MS because of the feeling that they cannot really help. Gerry says his wife, Gayle, offers tremendous support to both him and the group.

Gerry's current ambition is to get a strong telephone network among all persons in Mississauga with MS, not just those in the self-help group.

Now in his mid-40s, Gerry first noticed symptoms of MS during his late teens, and the disease was diagnosed when he was 30. He has always been active in sports, particularly hockey and golf, and had a nine handicap. Although mostly confined to a wheelchair, he uses a walker as much as possible and exercises daily to keep in shape.

Gerry finds woodworking a satisfying hobby and specializes in crafting beautiful clocks. His 14-year-old son, Russell, plays ball, is an ardent Blue Jay fan and receives lots of encouragement from his dad.

It is fitting that the Mississauga chapter has recognized Gerry's efforts to help others surmount their problems and face the challenges of everyday living. I am proud to pay tribute to his courage and inspiration.

SISTERS OF ST JOSEPH

Mr Adams: The Order of the Sisters of St Joseph was founded in France in the 17th century. Sisters came to St Louis in 1836, soon moving to Philadelphia. In 1851 a house was established in Toronto, then a town of 30,000, with offshoots across southern and northern Ontario soon to follow. In 1890, sisters moved to Lindsay, then Peterborough, which is now a mother house for projects across Canada and in South America.

Over the years, the sisters have worked as teachers, health care workers, care givers to the frail, elderly and orphans and as missionaries. They have ministered and continue to minister to native people, poor immigrants and the urban poor. They were there during the province's great cholera, typhus and typhoid epidemics. They nurtured the very roots of the separate school system.

Every generation of sisters has adapted to its times, changing the emphasis of their work, changing their style and methods to address the special needs of the day. In our day, they are an eye of focused calm in the social turmoil of our times. Here is proof that continuity and change are possible together, continuity of belief and purpose, adaptation of good work based on belief. In this era of environmental concern, the sisters deserve our congratulations for their 100 years of service.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

Miss Martel: On 15 March, staff at the Workers' Compensation Board wrote to the Premier to emphasize their concerns with conditions at the board. The chaos there has resulted from management's attempt to implement four new major strategies in one year. Along with the strategies are new imaging, telephone and payment systems which were pushed as well. Combined, the following problems have resulted.

1. The new technology for processing cheques is flawed and has resulted in cheques not going out, too many cheques going out and many cheques with improper amounts being issued.

2. Accounts of chiropractors, physicians and pharmacists are not being paid regularly and these service providers are refusing to deal with injured workers. I have examples of this in my own riding.

3. The new phone system is a disaster and means workers and their representatives can rarely speak directly to WCB staff when calls are made. Two weeks ago, representatives from Local 6500 made 21 calls to the board before they actually spoke to a staff member instead of an answering machine.

4. The Workers' Compensation Board reorganized its operations and created the integrated service units less than two years ago. They are now being reorganized yet again and management is intent on now applying this flawed model to the regional offices.

5. The WCB is advertising how Bill 162 will help workers, when in fact no internal policies have been developed to deal

with those portions of the bill that went into effect 2 January 1990.

These and other problems I will continue to raise, but they must be dealt with by the Minister of Labour.

INMATES' MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Cureatz: It grieves me somewhat to have to make this statement because, as members well know, from time to time I like to poke fun at all members and remind us all that we are hypocrites at times in this esteemed, august chamber.

However, the Minister of Correctional Services visited the community of Sault Ste Marie to announce plans for psychiatric services for the medium-security Northern Treatment Centre in that city. He spoke about the issue of day passes and explained that he was aware of concerns about—and I am using his words, I regret to say, “crazy people running around.” In fact, the minister said the residents of the Sault need not worry about the so-called crazy people, because the centre will be dealing not with violent criminals but with people who have addictions to drugs and alcohol. For the Minister of Correctional Services to be referring to inmates with psychiatric problems as crazy people is insulting and highly inappropriate.

Last week, I raised in this House the concerns of the growing number of psychiatric inmates in our institutions. By describing persons with psychiatric problems as crazy people, the minister is only reinforcing a very outdated and stereotyped atmosphere for institutions. He should be getting out and fighting for rehabilitation.

I spoke to him about the possibilities of selling the Whitby Jail to get the funds to build a new institution at the psychiatric treatment centre in Whitby. He told me his staff looked at it and there was not enough money. I say to the minister, that is his doggone job. He should get the money and build the new institution so that we can care for people.

LARISSA LOWING AND LISA FLOOD

Mrs Stoner: I would like to welcome to the House today two very talented young ladies from my riding, Larissa Lowing and Lisa Flood, and their very dedicated parents.

Lisa Flood is an 18-year-old swimmer who represented us in the Winter Nationals in Saskatoon, where she won a gold and two silver medals in the 100-, 200- and 50-metre breaststroke. Currently, Lisa is working with her coach to earn a spot on the Canadian national team and aspires to be part of our next Olympic team.

1340

Lisa has been joined by Larissa Lowing in bringing the athletic spotlight to Durham region. Larissa is a 17-year-old gymnastics star who represented Canada at the Seoul Olympics and has recently represented us at the Commonwealth Games in Auckland. There, she helped her teammates finish first in the overall team competition and, in the individual finals, Larissa received two silver medals in the beam and floor competition, after an injury.

Mr and Mrs Lowing and Mr and Mrs Flood, your patience and support of your daughters has obviously paid off. I am sure you are very, very proud. I would ask the House to welcome to this chamber the Lowings and the Floods.

RENT REGULATION

Mr D. S. Cooke: Last week in the Legislature during question period, I raised a couple of examples of rent increases

involving NHD Developments Ltd, which is owned by the Sorbara family. I would like to take this opportunity to update the Legislature with regard to the 62-unit complex in North York on Flax Garden Way. The tenants in that building are facing a 25 per cent increase in their rents, and the rent review decision is complete.

The rent review decision was made on 23 February 1990, but the decision affected rent levels as far back as 1 March 1989. As a result of the landlord being rewarded the rent increase of 25.7 per cent, some tenant families owe up to \$1,500 in back rent. The tenants in this complex have received eviction notices from the Sorbara family indicating that they must pay all their back rent immediately. Because of the shortage of housing in this community, the tenants have gone to the landlord and suggested that the back rent should be spread out over a longer period of time so that tenants are not economically evicted from the buildings. At this point, the position of the landlord is, “You pay up now or you are evicted,” and that is why the eviction notices have gone out.

Tenants all across this province are experiencing exactly the same problems because of the inefficiencies and the poorly planned rent review situation in Ontario. We in this party again call on this government to kill the rent review system as it currently exists and bring in rent controls in this province.

UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mr Jackson: I am pleased to bring to the attention of all members of the House a singular and historic event in the life of the Ukrainian Catholic Church which will occur tomorrow, Good Friday, in the Ukraine.

Soon after the Ukrainian church was officially recognized by the Soviet government in December 1989, Ukrainian Catholics intensified their efforts to have their historical cathedral of St George in Lvov returned to them. St George's is the primatial seat of the heads of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and is a deep symbol of Ukrainian religion and its national identity. The cathedral was confiscated by Soviet authorities in 1946 after the Ukrainian church was forcibly united to the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate that same year.

Last week, the Soviet government ordered that St George's Cathedral be returned to the Ukrainian Catholics. The head of the church, Metropolitan Vladimir Sterniuk, will take formal possession of his episcopal chair tomorrow, which this year is Good Friday for all Christians, both east and west. He will join with members of his pastva to celebrate Easter in St George's for the first time in almost half a century.

On behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party and as someone with deep ancestral Ukrainian roots, I would like to wish the worldwide Ukrainian community a most joyful and happy Easter as it continues to witness its church's own unfolding resurrection.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Mr Mahoney: Following on the comments by my colleague the member for Mississauga South, I would like to announce the recent opening of a resource centre for the Mississauga chapter of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada. This resource centre will act as a central place of contact in Mississauga for persons with multiple sclerosis, the public and the chapter's volunteers, as well as offering literature, information and support to persons with MS and their families.

Multiple sclerosis is the most common central nervous system disease of young adults in Canada. It interferes with the

brain's ability to control such functions as seeing, walking and talking, just to name a few. In fact, more than 50,000 Canadians are affected with MS and, as of today, the medical profession has discovered neither the cause nor the cure for this dreaded disease.

Multiple sclerosis has touched my family in recent years and I have come to realize the important role that the local chapters of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada play in the lives of the persons with MS and their families and friends.

The initial impact on a family when MS is discovered in a loved one is shock, disbelief and bewilderment. After these feelings fade, you begin to realize the inner strength of the victim and how that strength is actually support for the family. MS has actually made my family grow stronger as a result of the need to deal with this disease, and we have appreciated the support of the society.

I too offer my congratulations to Gerry Crowe on being named MS Person of the Year by the Mississauga chapter.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

BUDGET

Hon R. F. Nixon: I would like to advise the House that I intend to present the budget to the Legislature on Tuesday 24 April at 4 pm.

RESPONSES

BUDGET

Mr Laughren: I received the four pages in the brown envelope containing the Treasurer's announcement. Ever since this person became Treasurer of Ontario, we on this side have been trying to convince this Treasurer that there is a better way to tax the citizens of this province. Every year, we lay before the Treasurer some options that would allow him to raise at least as much money, if not more, but to do so in a much fairer fashion.

We have told the Treasurer how he can impose a minimum corporate tax—follow the lead of Ronald Reagan in the United States and have a minimum corporate tax—told him how he can increase the tax credits—

Hon Mrs Caplan: Say that again.

Mr Laughren: Well, if even Ronald Reagan brings in a minimum corporate tax and this Treasurer will not, what does that tell the members about this Treasurer compared to the Ronald Reagans of this world? There is some difference.

We have asked the Treasurer to increase the tax credits. The tax credits in this province are worth less than they were when they were brought in by the Conservatives back in 1974, I believe. They have eroded over the years. There is an opportunity to remove everyone who is below the Statistics Canada poverty level from the tax rolls in the province. That is an opportunity that has been wasted by this Treasurer.

We have asked him time and again to bring in a land speculation tax to stop the flipping of lands and properties, which increases the prices of homes and also, of course, by pass-through, increases rents for tenants, particularly in Metropolitan Toronto.

Of all the 24 countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, only two do not have a wealth tax: Canada and Australia. Only two countries out of the 24 OECD countries have no wealth tax; we are one of them. There is an opportunity there for the Treasurer to tax people in this

province who can afford to pay some more, so it is not as though there are not opportunities.

We shall also be looking for the Treasurer, in his budget, to provide some more jobs to communities such as Windsor. My colleague the member for Windsor-Riverside has made a passionate and even coherent plea to the Treasurer on numerous occasions to diversify and bring some public sector jobs to the city of Windsor, the way it has been done in some other communities, for which we have complimented the government. That does need to be done.

It is going to be fine for the Treasurer to stand in his place on 24 April and announce to the world that he has a balanced budget. But I would ask the Treasurer, on whose backs did he bring in that balanced budget? There are still thousands of people in this province well below the poverty line established by Statistics Canada who are paying provincial income tax. It is completely unnecessary. We told him where he can get the money and still have a tax system that is appropriate for Ontario and, at the same time, he could remove a lot of misery. There is no question that the number of food banks in this province has grown directly as a result of his perverse tax policies.

1350

Mr Brandt: I welcome the announcement by the Treasurer because we on this side of the House, and particularly in our party, have great expectations about the budget that the Treasurer will be tabling before this House in April. This may well be a historic budget in many respects, because the Treasurer may find it in the goodness of his heart, and in the wealth that he has accumulated through very significant increases in budgets in the past, to bring in—can my friends believe this?—a no-increase budget for the first time. I fully expect that that no-increase budget, which I anticipate is what the Treasurer will be tabling with us, will be the forerunner of other announcements which will follow shortly thereafter.

But I would like to say to the Treasurer with respect to the budget which he plans on bringing in, it is about time that we in Ontario looked very carefully at our competitive position. There is an article in the paper today about firms that are looking to the United States for locations, primarily in the Buffalo area, because it is so much easier and less expensive to do business in that particular jurisdiction. The reasons they are going over there are very simple. This Treasurer has brought in some 32 or more tax increases over the course of the past four or five years. Those tax increases include the employer health levy, and they include a first-time-only commercial concentration tax to make sure that we put every kind of impediment in the path of anybody who wants to create jobs in this province. We want to stop them cold in their tracks, and that is what the Treasurer has done with previous budgets.

Now he goes asking for forgiveness, he goes on bended knee before the people of this province and says: "Look at what I'm doing. I'm bringing in this very well balanced budget without any increases." The Treasurer may well think he is going to fool the public, but I have far too much respect and far too much confidence in the intellectual abilities of the people of this province. They will see through any scheme the Treasurer brings forward on that particular date, because a budget which for the first time brings in no increases, coming on the heels of the most rapid taxation increases in the history of this province, is simply not going to be adequate.

The Treasurer is a gentleman for whom I have great respect, on other than economic grounds. He knows that I have great respect for him when it comes to most other issues. When it

comes to finance and economics, quite frankly I think the Treasurer is an excellent farmer. I want to say that to him because I mean it sincerely. I do want to say that our party will be looking very closely at this budget. We intend to scrutinize it line by line and we will have an appropriate response on the date of the release of the budget documents.

Mr Villeneuve: I too want to remind the Treasurer very much that agriculture is still here in Ontario in spite of almost \$100 million of chopping. He was directly responsible for a \$27-million cut to a program which was brought in by the previous government to bring equity to the system. They called it the Ontario farm tax rebate program. It was simply to recognize that farmers should not be paying school tax on farm land and buildings. The Treasurer, ruminating one day in his home riding, decided that \$27 million would be chopped, and I am sure he did not even check with his colleague the former minister at that point in time. He unilaterally decided that farmers were getting just a little too much. Now, that was simply equity. I want to remind the Treasurer that interest rates have never been higher. Commodity prices are fetching prices of 20 years ago. Would the Treasurer please remember that agriculture is still very important to this province and consider it in a positive way in his upcoming budget?

ORAL QUESTIONS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr B. Rae: A question to the Minister of Financial Institutions: The Facility Association has indicated that the number of drivers who are being dumped into the Facility Association is now some 300,000 strong. The minister, in dealing with this situation, has always said that all we have to do is wait for Bill 68 and Bill 68 will deal with this problem. I want to say to the minister that if that is true, can he explain why it would be that on 1 December 1989 Mr Justice Coulter Osborne—who, the minister will know, has some expertise in these matters—was commenting at a gathering dealing with the insurance crisis and said this, “The incentives to writing business as a result of this”—referring to Bill 68—“will result in the population of the Facility Association expanding, as it already has.” Given that fact, why does the minister continue to tout Bill 68 as the answer to the problem when he knows it is going to contribute even more to the rise of the number of people who have to pay over \$1,500 for their car insurance?

Hon Mr Elston: The honourable gentleman knows that in many ways what he says is not completely the state of affairs. He knows that the gentleman who writes the things about the Facility was commenting on a perception of what was going to be happening. He has indicated that one of the reasons the Facility has grown is because of the tightness in the market and the concerns expressed about the way the product has performed, I guess, for the companies. While his critic, who has been speaking at length to prevent the bill from passing and to prevent the implementation of a system that will see average rates climb by only an average of zero per cent outside the large centres and by an average of eight per cent in the large urban centres, has indicated—

Mr Kormos: Up to 50 per cent, Murray. Come on, listen to yourself. Up to 50 per cent; that's what you promised drivers.

Hon Mr Elston: The honourable gentleman, the member for Welland-Thorold, has often said that the rates will go up by 50 per cent. That is not the state of affairs. If he were accurate,

he would have said that there would be average increases of zero outside the metropolitan areas and only an average of eight per cent within them. That means that there will be people above zero and people below zero; in other words, getting decreases.

The fact of the matter is that not all the people in the Facility Association have been dumped there. The Facility actually puts together the coverage for people who have not met the underwriting criteria of the companies because of certain problems associated with driving habits and otherwise.

I acknowledge that there are underwriting concerns because of the fact that some companies have left this jurisdiction and withdrawn the writing of insurance. As a result, people have fallen into the Facility because of the tightness of the market. Bill 68 sets up a new system, a reasonable system, with balanced costs and benefits, and in fact this will help with respect to the Facility.

Mr B. Rae: The minister is talking nonsense, and he knows it; absolute nonsense. There is nothing in his legislation, nothing in his law, nothing in Bill 68 which stops the insurance companies from picking and choosing whom they want to insure and how they want to insure them. There is nothing which stops them, nothing which stops skimming, nothing which stops them from creaming off the market. Already, Judge Osborne says, as many as 30 per cent of the drivers who are dumped in the Facility Association have clean records. They are there because the insurance companies simply decide, “We’d rather not insure you,” for whatever reason that may be. It could be a younger driver and they decide they do not want to have anything to do with that.

My question for the minister is, why is there nothing in his new law which stops the insurance companies from doing what they are doing now: picking and choosing, creaming off the top of the market and dumping those they do not want into the Facility Association? Why has he not dealt with that issue?

1400

Hon Mr Elston: One of the reasons that the honourable gentlemen has not seen very much happening with the bill in the committee of the whole or in the House is because those guys are filibustering. They will not allow us to debate. The reason that nothing can happen constructively in the auto insurance sector in Ontario to provide people with a better-priced product and in fact have better benefits and a market that is available is that the NDP is holding it up and preventing it from going the natural course of evolution in the system of our government.

These guys are speaking at length. That is fine. Let them go ahead. Do they want to frustrate this coming in? They can stand up there every day and say, “Prices are too high.” We have told them for a long time people are paying too much for auto insurance in this province because of the way the system has been working. We have come up with a reformed product which is comprehensive and, even though they do not like bits and pieces of it, it is, overall, the best and the only comprehensive option that we have today. We expect it will provide people with better cost product, better benefit levels and will make markets available and prevent people from going into the Facility Association, as the member contends. There is not any indication from any of the other parties that they have any option that approaches it.

Mr B. Rae: I do not mind the minister attacking me, but I would like him to think for a moment. The government asked

Judge Coulter Osborne of the Supreme Court of Ontario to do a report on car insurance. That report was two volumes long. Judge Osborne, not in this report but very recently at a meeting, said, "Insurers will not want to write policies for the very people that this plan is designed to protect; namely, those who are compelled by statute to buy insurance and to whom, for whatever reason, insurers are not willing to extend coverage". To quote him again, he says, "The population of the Facility Association will expand," because of the fact that the government is maintaining the premise of the current system, which is that the private companies have a monopoly on providing insurance and they decide who they are going to insure and how they are going to insure them. That is the premise of the current system, that is the premise of Bill 68. The government has still left the monopoly where it is and it has done nothing to protect the consumer in doing so.

I want to ask the minister again, why is it that when dealing with a real problem he is running away and simply doing the bidding of the insurance companies when he has a choice? He could step in on behalf of consumers. He has chosen the insurance companies over the insurers. Why has he done that?

Hon Mr Elston: I do not run away from anybody. I do not run away from the member for York South. I do not run and do the bidding of the insurance companies. I am here to protect the people who are wishing to purchase—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I try to get the other members to respect those asking questions. The reverse should also be true.

Hon Mr Elston: As a continuation of how the members of the NDP treat this issue, they want to prevent people from putting the real facts in front of the people. We are here to put in front of the people a comprehensive plan that provides a coverage for people who want to purchase auto insurance at reasonable prices and provides good benefit levels. That is what we have done. In fact, what we have done further is we have gone through Mr Justice Osborne's report and accepted a good number of his recommendations about how we have to strengthen, on behalf of the consumer, the regulator's role so that we can look to make sure that the people are delivering the benefits that are required. In fact, that is key to this proposal and something that the opposition leader does not wish to acknowledge. We have in place a way in which we take a look at the underwriting rules, the fact that there has to be prior approval of the rates before they go out. The context of the setting of those rates will be viewed by the insurance commissioner. We have a very sound and solid role to be played by our regulator on behalf of the consumers of this province.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr B. Rae: In the absence of the Premier, perhaps I could ask a question to the Treasurer.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Ugh.

Mr B. Rae: I knew he would be thrilled.

My question to the Treasurer takes on added meaning in the light of the fact that we are going to be having a budget in two weeks' time. The evidence is growing around the province that, contrary to the public relations campaign by the Liberal government, the number of people using food banks is still very high and, in many parts of the province, is on an increase. Indeed, even the Daily Bread Food Bank, which has indicated some

changes in its numbers, told us today that there are, according to its figures, 10,000 children under the age of two in Metropolitan Toronto who are still relying on food banks for their food.

My question for the Treasurer is this: What is he doing to do to begin to address surely the most glaring social injustice in the province today, and that is the continued presence in an affluent province, in a province in which a number of people have done extremely well over the last number of years, of so many people who are having to struggle even to eat?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The question is an extremely important one. I follow the matter as carefully as I possibly can. The honourable member might be aware that, of all the enthusiasm and support for the Social Assistance Review Committee's initiatives last year, I was one of the slowest to join that band of strong supporters, but was glad to do so when the usefulness of the SARC recommendations were clearly pointed out to me.

I was delighted to hear on CBC Metro Morning a couple of days ago from Gerard Kennedy—whom the honourable member would know probably better than I and who founded, or at least operates, the Daily Bread Food Bank, which is the largest and most effective one that I am familiar with—that the utilization and requirement for the food bank was down something like 15 per cent. He was good enough to say, and I can assure the honourable member that he has no particular political interest in our party, that he attributed this to the additional payments that had come through from the provincial Treasury, through the legislation and regulation that improved the SARC payments.

I was very glad to hear that, because that is exactly what it was supposed to do. It has been pointed out by others, including one of the honourable member's colleagues, that the second area of recommendations from the Social Assistance Review Committee dealt with the working poor, a matter that another one of the honourable member's colleagues raises from time to time in this House and a matter on which there is a lot of concern as well.

Mr Speaker is making some kind of gesture to me and I might continue this at a later moment.

Mr B. Rae: If he is making a gesture, I am sure it is one which we would all like to make from time to time.

The statistics are important to get a sense of if you talk to people who run the food banks in different parts of the province. For example, we have been on the phone to people in Ottawa, Waterloo and Kingston recently and we find that the hard reality is that there has not been any decrease in the use of food banks in those communities. For example, the Partners in Mission Food Bank in Kingston had a 19 per cent increase in food bank use between March 1989 and March 1990. Similarly, in Waterloo there has been an increase.

I would like to simply ask the Treasurer why it would be that this number would still be as high as it is, given the fact that the government trumpeted last year that it was spending \$400 million. They were taking all the credit for having gone ahead with the SARC reforms. Perhaps the Treasurer can explain to the House why it would be that the numbers would still be as high as they are. We have 10,000 kids under two in Toronto who are still using food banks. Is the Treasurer telling us that the government has basically gone as far as it is going to go and it is not going to go any further?

Hon R. F. Nixon: We did not trumpet the implementation of the SARC recommendations. We implemented the SARC recommendations, and it meant the largest single additional commitment for welfare services in the history of the province.

We are not finished yet. The honourable member, while he may take the role of Cassandra, should be aware of the specific facts in this area. That the utilization of food banks has been reduced by 25 per cent for those welfare families, families in receipt of special social assistance with young children. I believe that is an indication not of the solution of the problem, but at least that the allocation of some of these funds, which all come from the consolidated revenue fund, is having a useful effect.

1410

Mr Allen: I would like to send a contribution to the Treasurer from the Walk a Mile in My Shoes campaign, which brought thousands of shoes yesterday from the poor of Ontario, working poor and dependent poor. Those shoes were filled with messages, and I want to give them to the pages to take over to the Treasurer as well, because they make instructive reading. I think their message is essentially—if I can read one of them, perhaps it would be enlightening:

"I'm one of the more fortunate ones. I'm on FBA disability and live in supported housing. Even so, I struggle to survive because I run out of dollars by the third week of every month. I've used food banks because otherwise I go hungry. There are no dollars to buy clothes and no gifts at Christmas. I end up borrowing at the latter half of the month, pay it back at the first of the month, so I'm caught in a circle. I suffer from depression and fight it on a daily basis. The added stresses of living in poverty complicate my illness, making life absolutely miserable."

I simply say to the minister that while what the government did last year undoubtedly is having an effect out there, the message of this man, Jim Gillespie, is that income adequacy for those on social assistance and the working poor remains to be accomplished. In walking a mile in some of those shoes, will the Treasurer go an extra mile this year and provide income adequacy for those on social assistance and the working poor so that in fact the figures of those who patronize food banks will really decline substantially?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The utilization of food banks has declined dramatically, and the honourable member should be aware of that. The statistics come from Daily Bread Food Bank. If they come from the food bank that the honourable member may run from the back of his constituency office, his statistics may be different.

I am not for a moment saying the problem is solved. All I am saying is the \$415 million additional budgeted last year is having a salutary effect. The program, in addition, not only is designed to assist in the food bank problem that the honourable member and his colleagues and others have brought to public attention, but also assists those who have been caught in the trap of social assistance to move off that into a productive life-style, and in that connection we are also able to report significant success that I know the honourable member, in spite of his rather negative view of the world, would be the first to applaud.

CARDIOVASCULAR CARE

Mr Eves: I have a question of the Minister of Health. Dr Williams, a cardiovascular surgeon at the Hospital for Sick Children, has stated that the appropriate waiting time for a child for cardiac surgery is six to eight weeks at most and at most cardiac centres in the United States a child receives surgery within two weeks.

According to an external review headed by Dr Salerno of the Hospital for Sick Children, of which I am sure the minister is aware, the situation there is that the average waiting time for children on the waiting list for cardiovascular surgery is some 14.9 or 15 weeks. Does the minister think that this is an acceptable length of time for children to be waiting for cardiac surgery?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I do not want anyone in this province to wait one moment longer than is medically acceptable. That is why we are working with the experts to tell us how we can improve on what is already a very good system.

As he knows, there are some stresses in downtown Toronto, and the recent announcement of the establishment of the paediatric registry, which links, for the very first time, the cardiovascular services available at the children's hospital in western Ontario in London and the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa with the Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto, I think, will improve that situation.

Mr Eves: That is an interesting statement that the minister makes, because Dr Williams and Dr Salerno disagree with the minister there too. She was recently announcing, and she has just said so in the House again today, that she feels children waiting for treatment can be treated elsewhere in this province, namely, London and Ottawa. I am here to tell her that Dr Williams does not share her belief. He says that the type of expertise and procedures that are required are not available anywhere else in Ontario, in most cases, other than the Hospital for Sick Children. He says that in the past week alone they have had to refer one child to the Mayo Clinic, another to Philadelphia, and that Kingston is constantly referring children to Boston to have treatment because they cannot get it here in Ontario.

They have also identified for the minister on several occasions that the real problem is the shortage of intensive care nurses at the Hospital for Sick Children. I have been trying to tell her that; we have been trying to tell her that; they are trying to tell her that. When is the minister going to do something about that?

Hon Mrs Caplan: The children's hospital of London, the children's hospital of Ottawa and the children's hospital here in Toronto at Sick Children all provide cardiovascular services. There is no question that there are some very unique services which are only offered by the Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto, and we are working very closely with the experts, and I would say to the member that Dr Salerno is working very closely with the ministry in advising us as to how we can resolve the issues that we face.

We know as well that the nursing issue is very specific to downtown Toronto, and we have brought forward a package of significant nursing initiatives to create the kind of positive environment which I believe will go a long way, not only in the short term but in the long term as well. We know there are no simple or quick answers to this systemic issue facing not only Ontario but North America and the world, but I am confident that we are making progress here in Ontario.

Mr Eves: According to Dr Williams, this problem began in September 1988, which is when the nursing shortage began. That is his statement, not mine. Some 245 children have had their cardiac surgery cancelled at the Hospital for Sick Children since that period of time. That amounts to 18 per cent of their total case load. Currently there are 158 children waiting for cardiac surgery at the Hospital for Sick Children.

Talking about specifics and what Dr Salerno is doing to help the ministry, I am glad the minister brought that up. She

will know that Dr Salerno headed the external review at the Hospital for Sick Children and three weeks ago made a request to the minister for \$8 million that she respond to by today to provide the necessary funding for ICU nurses so this problem can be solved at the Hospital for Sick Children today. There is an immediate solution. It is in the minister's hands. Is she going to provide us with it or not?

Hon Mrs Caplan: Let me quote for the member opposite Dr Salerno's own words recently. This is Dr Salerno:

"I think that what has happened in the last year or so, and I have been a part of all of this, demonstrates to me that there is a great commitment for the ministry, the hospitals and cardiac surgeons to solve this problem."

Mr Eves: Did Dr Salerno ask you for \$8 million and want the answer today? What is the answer?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Hon Mrs Caplan: The member opposite knows full well that the hospitals of this province are transfer payment agencies of the ministry. There has been a very significant and I would say generous allocation by the Treasury to the hospitals which will amount to some \$6.5 billion.

Mr Eves: You know very well—

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Parry Sound.

Hon Mrs Caplan: I can say to the member opposite that we are making progress. The problems are there, we are meeting those challenges, and I am confident that by working together, with a positive attitude, as displayed by Dr Salerno, we can meet the challenges of Ontario, both for today and in the future.

Mr Eves: Are you going to give them the money or not, yes or no?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member for Parry Sound.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Runciman: My question is for the Minister of Financial Institutions related to his no-fault auto insurance plan. As he may recall, on a number of occasions I have raised the issue in this House with respect to the questions that have been raised about the constitutionality of the bill. I have suggested, and others have, that he make his legal opinions public and refer the bill to the Court of Appeal for a judgement with respect to its constitutionality.

Up to this point, the minister has refused to do that, but based on the Supreme Court decision with respect to the Patti Starr inquiry—I think this has some relevance—it indicates to us that there has been an overreliance on the part of the government with respect to legal opinions. I am wondering if the minister would respond in the House today: Have he and his colleagues in government learned their lesson from the Starr inquiry about their overreliance on legal opinions? Are they prepared to make their opinion public and refer the matter to the Court of Appeal?

Hon Mr Elston: We will not be referring the matter to the Court of Appeal. That is an unusual step taken, as you obviously know, Mr Speaker. It is not something that is countenanced every day. We know that opponents of the bill will challenge it on constitutional grounds, because that is the way they think they can best attack it after it goes through this House, if the opposition lets it go through the usual processes in this House.

The thing that we have to be aware of is that anybody now who has a concern about legislation always raises the issue of constitutionality. We have to check with our legal advisers as to whether or not the bill would sustain an attack under a constitutional charter charge, and we have the opinion that that in fact is the case.

That is not overreliance on legal advice. The drafting of legislation requires that sort of advice, and we must have it. We have the advice, we have indicated that, and we know that the opponents to the bill will continue to say they are going to charge that it is unconstitutional in the courts.

1420

Mr Runciman: That is an astounding response, an irresponsible response, I would suggest. When the minister is saying, "Let this be challenged once the law is passed," we are looking at two or three years down the road and the liability that is going to be attached to that sort of an approach.

We have a credible opinion that has been made public from Mr Henderson, former partner of the Attorney General in this government, and as I said earlier, the Starr decision very clearly indicates that you cannot rely on legal opinions from anybody.

Rumour has it—we are talking about the suit that has been filed against this government by the Ontario Nursing Home Association—once again this government is going to end up with egg on its face.

Why should we, the people of Ontario, be satisfied with secret legal opinions on this matter, given this government's track record? Why should we be satisfied with that approach?

Hon Mr Elston: In order to conduct the affairs of government, we have to contact people who are legal advisers on a regular basis. We are in the business of providing service under legislative requirements. We check with them in drafting regulations, we check in drafting legislation, we check in what manner we can try to pass legislation through the Legislature of Ontario, which does not appear to happen very easily any more, because the members want to filibuster the bill and prevent it from going through. I am referring more particularly, of course, to the official opposition, not so that my friend the member for Leeds-Grenville thinks I am pointing an unkind finger in his direction.

But to be reasonable, when people conduct business—and let there be no mistake about it, this government conducts a business of providing service and the implementation of policy for the people of the province, in this case with respect to auto insurance, a program which balances cost against the good benefits that are available under the plan and making the market respond by making the product available—we have to rely on advice from legal counsel.

The member says we ought not to rely on any legal advice, and when he tells us that we cannot, he then underscores the fact that nobody should take seriously any legal opinion. I do not share the view of my friend the member for Leeds-Grenville about the relevance of putting reliance in legal opinions. We must at least take heed when we see the results of their opinions. We have ours; it says that our bill is going to withstand the constitutional challenge.

Mr Runciman: The history of this government with respect to auto insurance is one costly mistake after another, and the people who end up paying the tab are the taxpayers of this province. The minister has a letter from the president of an insurance company, Kingsway, expressing concern about the constitutionality. The minister has an opinion from Gordon

Henderson expressing concern. The minister is talking about letting this thing go through the courts for two or three years, and we are talking about a liability in the hundreds of millions of dollars, so I want to pose this question to the minister: If indeed that is the course that is followed and he allows it to be followed, what is going to happen if this legislation is found unconstitutional? Who is going to be responsible for that liability, the insurance companies of this province or the already beleaguered taxpayers of this province?

Hon Mr Elston: I do not respond to the hypothetical questions of the member for Leeds-Grenville, who has taken on a certain negative cast just over these last few days. I know him as a very positive contributor to the debates on many other occasions, but he seems to have been captured by the spirit of the negative cloud that has drifted down from the people on his right, my left.

I am very sure he would want us to move forward and indicate that the bill should be passed, that in fact we should implement the system which provides for, on average, a zero increase of premiums in the next year for folks in the rural part of our province and only, on average, an eight per cent increase in the urban centres of the province. This we should do to make sure that we pass those savings on quickly. Otherwise, there will be people left at risk, left in a system which requires an adversarial-type adjudication, which I think is not as productive as we could have under the mandate of Bill 68, and I look forward to the passage of that bill very soon.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

Mr Mackenzie: I have a question for the Minister of Health. On 22 March the minister responded to my question about negotiating fairly with ambulance officers at Collingwood, Port Elgin and Kincardine, as suggested by the Ontario Public Service Labour Relations Tribunal, with the following comment:

"The Attorney General's office is making an application for a judicial review of both of these decisions, the McKechnie one as well. It has been decided, in fact, to await the outcome of those reviews."

Since the Attorney General has been proved wrong yet again and the government has come to its senses and dropped the review, is the minister now prepared to enter into real negotiations with the many so-called private ambulance operators whose contracts are currently up for renewal or will be in the next few days?

Hon Mrs Caplan: On 9 April the government withdrew its application to the Divisional Court for a stay of two rulings made by the Ontario Public Service Labour Relations Tribunal on the issue that the member opposite raises. In doing that, we also announced yesterday that we accept the tribunal's decision and confirmed that 21 private ambulance services where the Ontario Public Service Employees Union has bargaining rights are agents of the crown for collective bargaining purposes. The 21 private operators will continue to direct the daily operations of their ambulance services, and it is only for collective bargaining purposes that they will act as crown agents.

Mr Mackenzie: While we are talking about collective bargaining processes, a government spokesman, as the minister has indicated, did clearly indicate that the government accepts the ruling of the tribunal that they are crown employees. Does the minister agree with that comment by Bob Reguly in her ministry, and is she prepared to accept responsibility for bargaining

with those agencies and organizations that are funded by the government of Ontario?

Hon Mrs Caplan: To clarify the impression that the member opposite has, as I said before, we have said that, pending the judicial review, we accept the tribunal's decision. I announced in the House before that we would comply fully with it. We have confirmed that for the 21 private ambulance services where OPSEU has bargaining rights, they will be agents of the crown for collective bargaining purposes. That means that, as crown employees, ambulance workers will continue to have collective bargaining rights but disagreements will be resolved through binding arbitration, replacing the right to strike.

COMMERCIAL CONCENTRATION LEVY

Mr Cousens: In the absence of the Minister of Revenue, I will address this question to Ontario's number one tax grabber, the Treasurer. As he will know—

Interjections.

Mr Cousens: They blame Ottawa, but there is the problem right there on the front bench.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Question?

Mr Cousens: The Toronto Transit Commission is experiencing a marked decrease in the use of its parking lots. Parking lot revenues are expected to—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The Speaker would like to hear the question.

Mr Cousens: They do not want to hear it, Mr Speaker.

The Toronto Transit Commission is experiencing a marked decrease in the use of its parking lots. Parking lot revenues for the Toronto Transit Commission will decline this year by approximately \$2.4 million because of the decline in parking lot usage, and much of the decline in the TTC parking lot usage is being attributed to the Treasurer's tax, the commercial concentration tax. As the architect of these tax policies that are punishing transit riders, is the Treasurer proud of the fact that his government's tax policies are contributing to parking problems and traffic chaos in Metro Toronto?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member compared the effects of our budgets in the province to those of the government of Canada. I have a feeling he has forgotten that in fact our tax policies, however disagreeable he may find them, are actually paying the bills of this government, while the Progressive Conservative government in Ottawa is going into deficit by \$30 billion this year.

He should also be aware that the effect of the commercial concentration tax amounts to \$1.35 per day per parking spot. The fact that the Toronto Parking Authority concentrated the effect of that tax on its 100 parking lots into about 20 parking lots, the busy ones, so it could collect all the required money in a concentrated and focused way is its decision and not mine. If the honourable member feels that \$1.35 per day per space is unnecessarily high, then of course he has the right to his view, but I think he is wrong in his objection.

1430

Mr Cousens: The problem starts with the high spending that is going on in this government and then the high way in which it is going out to grab the money.

Because of this commercial concentration tax, municipal governments and agencies are exploring ways of avoiding the tax and, when these parking lots no longer generate revenue and become free, he will not get any money at all out of them. So what he is ending up having is a higher vacancy rate now. He is seeing people parking illegally on the streets. They are contributing to gridlock by driving their cars into the city more than they did before. It is eroding that source of revenue that he had.

Why would this government not support the amendment that our party put forward that would have exempted the municipally owned and operated lots from this commercial concentration tax?

Hon R. F. Nixon: It is because the money from the tax is going to support public transit and the improvement of the highway system that really serves many hundred of thousands of people in the Toronto area, but particularly the honourable member's constituents in Markham.

As a matter of fact, there is \$2 billion extra allocated to the improvement of the highway system and the public transit system over the next five years and the funding is directly associated with the taxes that the honourable member is objecting to. He wants his cake but he certainly does not want to pay for his share of it, and I think that is undemocratic and unfair.

PLANT CLOSURE

Mr Tatham: My question is for the Minister of Labour, and it is with a certain amount of sadness that I ask the question. Since early March, I have been monitoring the Harvey Woods operation in Woodstock in Oxford county. As the minister knows, about 600 workers of Harvey Woods, members of Locals 1300 and 986 of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, will be unemployed because of the Harvey Woods closing.

Harvey Woods is one of our largest and oldest employers in Woodstock, and the employees are fine, hardworking people. I would appreciate the minister's assistance in helping these employees. Could he please inform this House on matters of severance and holiday pay for these Harvey Woods employees?

Hon Mr Phillips: I share the member's concern about the individuals who are facing this very unfortunate circumstance. I appreciate the interest that he has taken in it and his personal presentations to me and to others.

First, on the remuneration side, my understanding is that at least the wages that were owing these workers have been paid. However, it appears that some of the vacation pay has not been paid, and certainly in terms of severance or termination, none of those payments have been made.

Our employment standards branch is issuing orders to attempt to receive that, but I think the member should be aware that under the federal Bankruptcy Act, we have difficulty in securing those funds. That is a matter that we have urged the federal government to act on and it has yet to act on that.

In the other area of assisting the workers, though, I understand we have established an employee assistance program. We will be working with the union and with the workers there in terms of counselling, in terms of training and helping to ensure that they receive their unemployment insurance benefits.

Mr Tatham: Has the minister any information on pensions and retraining? What schedules are there for retraining?

Hon Mr Phillips: First, in terms of the pensions, again as a result of the member's interest in this matter, I have discussed it with the Minister of Financial Institutions. I am told that the Pension Commission of Ontario has appointed an individual to look at the status of those pension funds. I am led to believe that there are seven different pension funds for those employees. At this moment, they are looking to ensure that the pension fund is properly administered.

In terms of training, we have a program called Transitions for workers who are 45 years of age and older, and the employment adjustment committee will be working with that to help in the training area, as well as working with the federal government to assist the people who are affected by this.

CORPORATE TAX

Mr Laughren: I have a question for the Treasurer concerning his perverse tax policies. I think the Treasurer will know that in 1987, using Statistics Canada Canadian-wide figures and extrapolating them into Ontario, there were roughly 40,000 corporations in Ontario that had positive incomes that used tax loopholes and write-downs to reduce those profits to zero. Because of that, we believe that there were \$11 billion in corporate profits in Ontario in 1987 that were not taxed. Using 1990 figures, that would be up around \$15 billion.

Will the Treasurer bring in at least a minimum corporate tax at approximately one half the statutory rate, which is 15.5 per cent, so that we can raise the necessary money to make this a more just society?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I think the honourable member is aware that the corporations that he is referring to that pay no tax even though they make a profit get that tax write-down or exemption, if you want to call it that, on the basis that their commitments and their financial expenditures align themselves with government taxation policy; that is, their profits are spent on new machinery or some sort of an expansion that is going to be advantageous to the community, or they are covered by previous losses.

Sometimes this gets rather complex when a company buys another company. Company A may be profitable; company B, which it buys, may have a loss, which might be called a tax loss, having to do with its previous experience. Under the law, that loss can be transferable. It gets a little fancy, it gets a little lawyerish, it gets written with accountants and it is all legal and probably appropriate. I have got a lot more to say about this.

Mr Laughren: If the Treasurer does not have something better than that to say, he should save it. It is passing strange that the Treasurer has all these arguments why he cannot do it. The United States has done it. I do not know what they have got that he has not got in terms of wizardry at putting together a package in Ontario that would provide a minimum corporate tax.

We are talking about lost income of approximately \$1 billion a year. That \$1 billion a year would allow the Treasurer to either reduce his retail sales tax to compensate for the federal goods and services tax or to remove every single taxpayer in the province from paying provincial income tax if that taxpayer is living on an income below the poverty level as established by Statscan. Will the Treasurer make a commitment to do that in this budget?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member knows, if we had a chance to carry on a proper debate at this time, rather than in 45-second spasms, that the province has a capital tax, which means that we have payments from all corporations whether or not they show a profit. He might be recommending that the capital tax be increased, and that is always something that could be considered. But we feel that it is reasonably fair and equitable.

The honourable member is living up to his tradition as a democratic socialist. Whenever there is a problem with meeting the budgetary requirements of the province, he says: "Let the companies—Inco—pay. Let the rich—anybody else—pay." His own income is climbing up there a little bit, and he had better watch the direction of his recommendations.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr McLean: My question is for the Minister of the Environment. The Minister of the Environment must know about the city of Orillia's plan to work with a private company to build a recycling and incineration plant for municipal waste from the greater Toronto area. The city council in Orillia is enthusiastic about this proposal but is not sure of the Ministry of the Environment's position on incineration. They do know it is not to be used for the 50 per cent diversion of waste by the year 2000.

Will the minister tell us if incineration will be allowed to deal with the remaining 50 per cent of the garbage from the greater Toronto area?

Hon Mr Bradley: This is interesting. First of all, I think I remember during the last election that the member benefited immensely because there was some kind of proposal to have north Simcoe's garbage go to the area which he represents, in other words, Orillia. There was a great fight that they should not accept that relatively modest amount of waste coming from there. Is the member telling me now that the city of Orillia is enthusiastic about having Metro Toronto's garbage go there for the purposes of incineration? I just want to get that right in my mind, first of all.

1440

Second of all, the member is quite correct when he says that the policy of the Ministry of the Environment is that we cannot count any disposal method, whether that be landfill or incineration, as part of the 25 per cent reduction by 1992 and the 50 per cent reduction by the year 2000. All disposal methods come under environmental scrutiny, and there would be a hearing of the Environmental Assessment Board and assessment by the various ministries of the government of Ontario. So, as a disposal method, they would have to meet all of the environmental requirements of the province.

Mr McLean: Mayor Palmer said, "The proposal makes the best use of European technology and North American knowhow that I have seen." We understand that this is just a proposal right now and we also understand it will go through a full environmental assessment, but what we want to know is this: Is incineration an option that the city of Orillia can support to handle the greater Toronto area waste that is not recycled in the long term?

Hon Mr Bradley: Certainly the city of Orillia or its proponent in this particular case is welcome to make application. I guess the committee that they would go through is SWISC, the Solid Waste Interim Steering Committee in Metro Toronto, which is looking at the requirements of Metro Toronto.

I want to make it clear that as a method of disposal, either landfill or incineration, if it were environmentally acceptable, that is, if the Environmental Assessment Board were to rule in favour of such an application, would be accepted. For instance, in the regional municipality of Peel there was a facility, an energy-from-waste facility in that case, which was approved by the EAB. They attached some 31 conditions to it but it was approved and has a green light to move forward.

But the member is quite correct, and I am glad he clarified that it would not be counted as the 25 or 50 per cent in terms of recycling.

HOME CARE

Mr Sola: My question is to the Minister of Health. All members will know that the government is committed to moving towards a health care system which is less institutionally based and more community based. Can the minister inform the House whether her ministry's home care program is receiving the necessary financial support from the honourable member one seat removed from her to enable it to provide more services in support of people who need them?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I would like to thank the member for Mississauga East and acknowledge the fact that he represents his constituents well and ensures that I am aware of their concerns.

I am pleased to tell him that this government is in fact committed to a health system where we have a broad range of services and opportunities for people to have those services, not only in the institution but in the community and, as technology allows, in people's homes as well.

As an interesting statistic, in 1984-85, the ministry spent \$104 million on home care services, and that was an increase of just 1.9 per cent over the allocation of the previous government the year before. In 1989-90, this government spent some \$350 million on home care, and that was an increase of some 25 per cent over the year before. That is over three times the allocation for home care services which was in place in 1984-85.

Mr Sola: In light of the long-term care reform initiative which the government has undertaken, can the minister comment on the implications for the home care program specifically? Will people still have ready access to the program?

Hon Mrs Caplan: As the member knows, not only is our financial commitment clear, but also our commitment to improving access for people around the province to home support services. I want him to know that we have taken a number of initiatives to improve access to all services, one being the banning of extra billing as well as the abolition of OHIP premiums.

Specific to home care services, I believe that long-term care reform will be a significant initiative to speed access to appropriate services. What is currently in place is that anyone wishing to access services, as the member knows and has pointed out to me, has to contact each one of the service providers to try to find the appropriate services for himself. Under long-term care, the principle is a single point of access which will give people the information they need so that they can have the services provided to them in a timely manner.

I want to thank the member for his question. I know of his great concern in this area.

GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY

Mrs Grier: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment concerning the very damning indictment of his

stewardship of the Great Lakes that was issued this week by the International Joint Commission.

Hon Mr Bradley: My stewardship?

Mrs Grier: The provincial responsibility for the Great Lakes lies with his ministry—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs Grier: I take it from that response that the minister is attempting to say that he has no responsibility for the control of toxic discharges into the Great Lakes. That has certainly been our perception for the last four years—

The Deputy Speaker: The question?

Mrs Grier: My question to the minister is—in response to this damning indictment, he of course quoted the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement, a program he announced in June 1986 which called for virtual elimination of toxic discharges to the Great Lakes. Can the minister explain why, four years later, there is not one single control regulation in place under this MISA program?

Hon Mr Bradley: First of all, I see that the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore has made me entirely responsible for all the Great Lakes. I expect it will be the St Lawrence River and the Atlantic Ocean next, because it does flow into the Atlantic Ocean. I remind the member that of course there are at least eight other states of the United States that discharge directly into those waterways, and of course there are air pollutants that come from all around the world and end up landing in those waterways. But we in Ontario indeed have taken the initiative.

The member may have been aware, when there was a forum held partly in Chicago and partly here in Toronto at the waterfront, that a number of scientists expressed concerns about the Great Lakes, as we have. One of the people there in fact was a person independent of this ministry who was extolling the virtues of the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement, a person saying that here was one jurisdiction that had an excellent program for dealing with the responsibilities we have.

I remind the member as well that all the monitoring regulations are out. They have been promulgated and are out there for the purpose of comment. Some of them are in the process of being implemented, looking at over 200 potential contaminants, where before all they used to look at were the lumps and the colours.

Even with those monitoring regulations in place, the companies involved are making modifications to their plans, even before abatement regulations are in place, and you get companies such as Dow in Sarnia and Domtar in eastern Ontario both saying that they are now committing financially and otherwise to a closed-loop system which will immensely benefit those waterways.

In my supplementary, I will elaborate on some of the other measures we are taking.

Mrs Grier: It is disappointing to hear this minister say that because there are other jurisdictions involved, that somehow excuses his lack of action.

But let me point out that it is obvious that members of the International Joint Commission are very familiar with this minister. If I may quote one sentence in their report, they say, "It is not sufficient to respond to such threats"—the health threats they point out—"by reciting a list of existing programs and

their merits." That is precisely what this minister does every time we raise the issue.

The Deputy Speaker: Supplementary?

Mrs Grier: If the minister is doing such a great job, can he explain why, less than a month ago, five responsible environmental groups, Greenpeace, Pollution Probe, Great Lakes United, the Canadian Environmental Law Association and the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy, had to issue a press release in which they said, "Environmentalists have accused the Ministry of the Environment of collaborating with polluters in resolving key issues as part of the provincial water pollution control program, MISA"?

They went on to say, "The public will no longer tolerate government compromises on environmental protection." Is that not precisely what he has just described to us, compromises with industry instead of virtual elimination of discharges?

1450

Hon Mr Bradley: Nothing could be farther from the truth. If the member would only look at the membership of the MISA Advisory Committee, I can assure her that members of industry were not very happy initially when they saw the list of people on the MISA Advisory Committee that we set up. Well-known environmentalists, not only in Ontario but across Canada, are members of that particular committee. There are some who would say it is stacked with environmentalists, scientific experts in the field who have fought for environmental reform over the years. They are there to comment on all of these regulations, to have input on all of these regulations. I think it besmirches their particular reputation to make that kind of charge.

Second, this member, and justifiably so, is as anxious as I am to see the program proceed quickly, but what those environmental groups are saying is: "Would you please pause now? Would you please slow down the program so we can have some further input?" Not with the people sitting on the MISA Advisory Committee, because even though they belong to environment groups, they do not represent those environment groups on the committee, they said.

I am quite pleased to have them involved in the process. But I do not want the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore then to get up in this House and say, "Well, you're slowing down the process now because you are allowing these people some input." I am prepared to allow that input. I really look forward to the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore supporting that particular pause in the action while we undertake that activity.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Villeneuve: The Minister of Financial Institutions is probably aware that the Minister of Agriculture and Food keeps statistics on farm income. Realized net farm income, according to projections for this year, is in its third year of decline, and total net income for agriculture this year will only be 86 per cent of what it was last year, a 14 per cent reduction.

The minister's Bill 68 on no-fault insurance proposes to compensate accident-injured farmers at 80 per cent of annual income. What representation has the Minister of Agriculture and Food brought to the minister's attention when he was formulating these rules that we are attempting to deal with in this House?

Hon Mr Elston: What has happened in our cabinet is that we are highly consultative. In fact, in all cases where there are ministers who represent special and very highly regarded seg-

ments of our economy, we go directly and speak with them. In this case, nothing different has changed. We recognize the difficulties agriculture has been experiencing. We saw the member's earlier speech about concern. It did not have to be made because the member for Brant-Haldimand of course is very much aware of the concern about agriculture.

As the member from Bruce county, I am also very concerned about farmers. We took a great deal of time to study how our system would compensate farm people. As the regulations are brought forward, we shall continue to study the exact way in which the results of farm income are to be put together so that the 80 per cent figure can be arrived at.

We have a minimum figure, as the member already knows; I am sure he is aware of it. He can in his supplementary, therefore, let the people of Ontario know about that minimum number. So that he does not leave an impression that he is uninformed, I will leave the member that ability and we can deal with a follow-up question in his supplementary.

Mr Villeneuve: I certainly will. The minister may even want to take a look at Bruce county farmers and their net income. Why is he not looking at those kind of situations? He is forcing agriculture and small business into buying income guarantee insurance. That is what he is doing.

Mr Brandt: Another expense they can't afford.

Hon Mr Elston: They're paying auto insurance now.

Mr Villeneuve: Will he, as minister, table in this House the representations that have been made to him by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and why will he not consider gross income instead of net income as the criterion? One hundred and eighty-five dollars a week will not buy much replacement.

Hon Mr Elston: I had thought the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry really did know the minimum number, which is actually \$232. That is where we start, not \$185. I am sorry he was not able to advise the people about that number.

That is not the main concern. I know that from my point of view, from my relationships with him in the context of our discussions here, his concern for agriculture is real. He should then acknowledge that so are my concerns for agriculture and the fact that we will bring forward a program that is reasonable for those people who are actually on the farm.

The member for Sarnia had interjected—I think he was probably thinking out loud—that they cannot afford to pay the prices for insurance. Right now the people from the farming community are paying the costs of a spiralling auto insurance premium, and what we have brought forward is a way in which to balance the costs they will be saddled with for auto insurance premiums with the benefits they receive. We have put together a very good way of reimbursing those people for their losses as a result of insurance.

CONSTITUTIONAL ACCORD

Mr Eves: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would like to rise to correct the record. On 9 April, Monday of this week, I asked a question of the Premier in this House, whether he was going to attend a fund-raising dinner with the Premier of Newfoundland called "Meech and Merriment." I suggested to him it was inappropriate to do so. The point of the record I want to correct is that I now understand that Mr Wells refuses to participate in this process. He has some class. Why does our Premier not show that same class?

The Deputy Speaker: As I am sure the member for Parry Sound knows, this is not a point of order.

Mr Eves: I corrected the record. I said the Premier of Newfoundland is going. He is not going. He has some class. I wish we had some over there.

MOTION

EXTENSION OF HOUSE HOURS

Mr Offer moved, on behalf of Mr Ward, that the daily hours of meeting of the House be extended from 6 pm to 12 midnight on each sessional day following the adoption of this order up to and including Thursday 3 May 1990; and this order shall take precedence over any standing order or other special order.

Mr D. S. Cooke: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would like to raise the matter and suggest to you that this motion is out of order and should not be placed here today. I might start by saying that it is really getting ridiculous around this place that the government—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr D. S. Cooke: The government and the opposition parties went through a process where we negotiated the rules by which we are supposed to operate, and now the government, day after day, is trying to subvert the rules that we agreed to as free political parties in this place. I think it should be absolutely ashamed. It negotiates rules. We negotiate them in good faith—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. If I remember well, the Speaker is trying to listen to some points of order from all the members around the House, of all three parties. I want to listen to points of order.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Mr Speaker, it is also quite obvious that the Liberal caucus has absolutely no respect for the Speaker or the Speaker's office or they would not, day after day, be putting you in this position of having to rule on their attempts to subvert the rules around this place.

The Deputy Speaker: You are bringing points of order to which standing order?

1500

Mr D. S. Cooke: Mr Speaker, I would like to refer you and the members of the assembly to standing order 6, under "Meetings of the House."

"6(a) During a Parliament, the House shall meet:

"(i) from the second Monday in March to the Thursday preceding Victoria Day and from the first Monday following Victoria Day to the fourth Thursday in June;"

It goes on in (ii) to outline the fall session:

"(b)(i) During the last eight sessional days in June and December, a motion to extend the hours of meeting during the remaining days in each period provided for in clause (a) may be proposed, with notice, by a minister of the crown.

"(ii) No such motion may specify that the House meet beyond 12 midnight.

"(iii) Not more than two hours after the commencement of proceedings of such a motion, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the motion. If a recorded vote is requested by five members, the division bells shall be limited to 15 minutes."

That section of the rules, negotiated by all three parties and agreed to, sets out the criteria and the dates by which this place can sit after six o'clock and until midnight.

I would like to also refer to standing order 9:

"9(a) Except as provided in clause (c), and in standing order 33, at 6 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, the Speaker shall adjourn the House without motion until the next sessional day.

"(c) The House may meet beyond the hours set out in clause (a) on the passage of a government motion for that purpose. The question on such a motion shall be put forthwith and without debate. However, the motion shall not be voted upon if 12 members stand in their places when the question is about to be put. If a recorded vote is requested by five members, the division bell shall be limited to 15 minutes."

Clearly, when the rules were being negotiated, all three political parties looked at a calendar and decided the hours and days that this House will meet. We anticipated that the government, on occasion, would feel that its agenda was not being carried. Therefore, it has the protection in the last eight days of the spring and fall sessions to make the Legislature sit until midnight. There is a provision that a motion would be tabled, a two-hour debate on the motion and then a division.

The government now is trying to say that all of those rules mean absolutely nothing, that it can set the hours of the Legislature by majority and that it can set any hours it wants under motion. Mr Speaker, I do not understand what any of these rules mean and why we even have them, if it would be your ruling that they can set the hours and make us sit until midnight every night of the week until 3 May just by majority vote under the routine proceedings of motions.

Why do we even have these sections in our standing orders? We tried to arrange the business of this House, the hours and the dates that the House would sit so that no one in this place would, as happened in many years before, be sitting until midnight and two in the morning on a regular basis. Quite frankly, one of the concerns of why these rules were negotiated was because people in the past actually got sick because of the extensive hours members had been requested to put in, here and on the weekends.

We tried to build a rational calendar and hours for this place to operate. Now the government brings in this type of motion and subverts the rules that have not even been in place for a year. Mr Speaker, I ask you to put a stop to this nonsense and rule this motion out of order now, and then let's get on with the regular business of the House.

Mr Eves: On the same point of order, I could not agree with my colleague the member for Windsor-Riverside more. When the three parties negotiated the standing orders, which were negotiated over a period of many years, I might add, and agreed upon by all three parties—we had this discussion on a point of order and a motion yesterday, as I recall—we agreed and we set out certain sitting times, which have been clearly outlined by my friend the House leader for the New Democratic Party.

Standing order 8, standing order 6 and standing order 9, I think clearly set out when the House is supposed to sit. Provision is made to sit until midnight for the last two weeks of a session in case the government has to clear up things on its agenda that it would like to clear up before the end of a session. If the government wishes to extend the sitting orders past 6 pm on any day, it can try to do so under standing order 9(c), and all three parties agreed that if 12 members stood in their place and

objected to that, it would not sit past six of the clock on any of those days.

I think the proceedings in the Legislative Assembly, as standing order 1(a) says, are supposed to be "conducted according to the following standing orders," and then it goes on to outline what we as members of the Legislature in all three parties have agreed would be our rules of conduct and how we would conduct business in this Legislature.

I support my colleague's comments that this particular motion is indeed out of order.

Hon Mr Offer: I have listened intently to the arguments posed by members opposite. I think, Mr Speaker, you should be aware that this particular motion was made under standing order 34. It was not a standing order 9(c) motion, but rather a standing order 34 motion under routine proceedings, which deals very specifically with the matter. It says:

"Under the proceeding 'Motions,' the government House leader"—in that capacity I was so acting—"may move routine motions that are part of the technical procedure of the House, such as for times of meeting and adjournment of the House, changes in membership of committees and similar non-substantive motions. These routine motions do not require notice."

As members opposite have spoken about a difficulty in the rules, I suggest that this is very clearly outlined under standing order 34. It speaks to routine motions moved by the House leader, which I did as acting House leader, talking to and speaking for times for meetings and adjournment, which is indeed what this motion is all about.

Mr Sterling: I have to tell you, Mr Speaker, that I really am shocked and dismayed over this particular motion because of what it really tries to do. The government deputy House leader, I assume, the Solicitor General, refers to section 34 in making his pitch. Clearly, under section 34 of the standing orders, we have always used these kinds of routine motions in this House where there has been unanimous consent or agreement between all three parties as to the allocation of time, as to whether or not the sitting should be extended because there is a necessity to go 10 minutes beyond six of the clock in order to finish an item of business, or to agree for instance to allow the Liberal caucus the opportunity to go to its national convention. We agreed by unanimous consent to close down this place on 21 June or the day close to that. So that is what section 34 has been used for in this Legislature.

I would like to point out another factor to you, Mr Speaker. The very first section of our standing orders says, "1(a) The proceedings in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and in all committees of the assembly shall be conducted according to the following standing orders." I would argue that the last part of this motion, which says, "and that this order shall take precedence over any standing order or other special order," effectively goes against section 1(a).

If in fact the government has such a paranoia about a four- or five-day filibuster that it wants to change the standing orders holus-bolus, then I suggest it bring in a substantive motion that will in fact deal with amending the standing orders so that it can gain control of this House at its pleasure, any time it wants, and not hide behind what I would call a sneaky manoeuvre or an attempt at a sneaky manoeuvre to hijack the House and disregard the standing orders.

I want to say that in all of my 12 years in this place I have not encountered such a motion—I dare say the former government of this Legislative Assembly, when it was controlled by the party of which I am a member, would never have had the

nerve to bring forward a motion of this nature. We would not have done this. Basically what it does is it says to the opposition parties, "We do not care about the orders and the rules we have agreed to. We are going to override that with our wishes on the basis of a four- or five-day filibuster."

I cannot express to you, Mr Speaker, the outrage that I have, in terms of the time and effort that I put into amending these orders, that members can have such little regard for the orders and for the work that the member for Oshawa and I, and the member for Middlesex, put into this whole process.

1510

The Deputy Speaker: I have listened very attentively. I have gone over each of the points that all of the honourable members have brought up. I am governed, as you know, by standing orders 1(a) and 1(b)—1(b) if I cannot find it under 1(a)—and I can only rule as to the validity of whether it is in order or not. That is the only rule that I want to make. Because of standing order 34, I have to rule that the motion is in order to be brought forward.

Mr D. S. Cooke: What about six? What about nine?

The Deputy Speaker: I have ruled. Standing order 34 is wide enough, catching enough as a general standing order to have this acceptable. This is a motion that is debatable, and if members want to debate, then—

Mr Eves: I have a point of order: I would like you to tell me and the other members of the Legislature exactly—

Some hon members: It's not a point of order.

Mr Eves: Just listen for a minute. This is on another point. Would members listen? There is some information in here; they might actually learn something.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Eves: I want an explanation. In your opinion, Mr Speaker, when this motion is passed, when does it take effect? I will read the motion to you:

"That the daily hours of meeting of the House be extended from 6 pm to 12 midnight on each sessional day following the adoption of this order up to and including Thursday, 3 May 1990," etc.

I want to know, in your opinion, if that motion, for an example, happened to be passed at 5:45 today, would the House be sitting, by the wording of this motion, till midnight today, or would it not start to sit till midnight till the sessional day following the adoption of the order, which would be next Tuesday?

The Deputy Speaker: My understanding of the resolution is that it would start, if adopted today, next Tuesday.

Mr Eves: And if the debate does not end until May 4?

The Deputy Speaker: There is no time limit for the debate.

Mr Kormos: I want to start debating this motion and, I dare say, I have about as much to say about this as I have to say about the crummy time closure motion that the House leader from the Liberal Party tried to jackboot on to this House around two weeks ago. The problem is, we are partway into our discussion of time allocation. Help me, please, Mr Speaker, because I want to be perfectly clear about what we are doing here.

As I understand it, the time allocation discussion that I commenced two weeks ago is not over; it is simply held in abeyance. What the Liberals have done with this motion is, they

have slowed down a process that we were eager to see developed. There I was, well into my discussion about time closure, my discussion of the jackboot tactics of this government, my discussion about the many reasons why the people of this Legislature should vote against closure.

I had the impression that there were some Liberal members here who were finding the process tedious. I had people coming to me saying, "Please, Pete,"—because as members know, we refer to each other only by our ridings here in the Legislature. But I had Liberal members coming to me saying, "Please, Pete, can't we get this discussion about time closure done and over with?" And I said, "Sure, Fred."

Miss Martel: Only his friends call him Fred.

Mr Kormos: He lets me call him Fred, okay?

"It's a simple matter of getting down to the nitty-gritty. It's a simple matter of canvassing the issues that are relevant to time closure."

I explained that if the House leader would only withdraw it, if he would send a note to me or to the House leader for the New Democratic Party saying, "Look, give me two minutes so I can stand up and withdraw the bill," he would have pulled the rug out from underneath me because there would be nothing more to talk about, there would be nothing more for me to address. Then we could get down to what we really want to talk about here, which is Bill 68, the Liberals' automobile insurance legislation. That is what we really want to talk about is it not, Mr Speaker? It is remarkable the lengths to which the Liberals in this assembly will go to avoid talking about Bill 68.

This is like sitting in the barber shop and looking at the mirror and then the mirror behind you, and the reflections just go on for ever and ever. Before you know it, in about a week's or a week and a half's time, the Liberal House leader—or if he wants to avoid the flak, he will make the Solicitor General do it again—will send the Solicitor General in as perhaps the newest, youngest member of cabinet, one who is hard-pressed to talk back, and say, "Solicitor General, move a time allocation motion on the motion that we moved on 12 April, which we moved to interrupt the time allocation debate on our time allocation motion, which we moved to avoid debate on Bill 68." Once again, it strikes me that could be the subject matter of a whole lot of discussion.

Excuse me while I get my notes in some order here.

As well, procedurally, I in no way agree that my comments about the time allocation motion be adopted during the course of the discussion of the—Mr Speaker, I am wondering if one of the pages might send me a copy of this motion, the motion that has just been filed with the clerk, moved by the Solicitor General. Let's take a look at what we are talking about here. It says, "Mr Ward moves," and then it has "delete Ward" and "insert Offer."

"Mr Ward moves that the daily hours of meeting of the House be extended." Wait a minute, Mr Speaker. I am wondering if this motion is even sensical, because it says, "that the daily hours of meeting of the House be extended from 6 pm to 12 midnight on each sessional day."

By the most bizarre stretch of the imagination, it is not good English, and I suspect the Solicitor General does not have to take credit for that. Rather, that can be adopted by the House leader. "Be extended from 6 pm to 12 midnight." It is not the daily hours of meeting. I suspect what they want to suggest by virtue of this motion is that the closing hour of the House be extended from 6 pm to 12 midnight, because for them to say, "that the daily hours of meeting," which are, as it is now, from

1:30 to 6 pm—this motion appears to suggest that they be extended from 1:30 pm to 6 pm to 6 pm to 12 midnight, making for a six-hour sitting commencing at six o'clock in the evening "on each sessional day following the adoption of this order up to and including Thursday 3 May 1990; and that this order shall take precedence over any standing order or other special order."

1520

Mr Speaker, I have a point of order. This bothers me a great deal. I am not talking now about the jackboot tactics. I am not talking about the sleazy intent that might be suggested is behind this. But I am asking, what is it that the House leader from the Liberals or the Solicitor General would have us be talking about?

My problem might be that I never practised civil law, like some of the Liberal members. I never practised personal injury work as some of them did. I practised criminal work, and I know that you, as a lawyer, Mr Speaker, would be most interested in the wording of this particular motion. I think that is important from a point of view—let me give you my copy of it, Mr Speaker. Let me share my copy of it with you. I wonder if we might get a photocopy of that so that we can both look at it.

Spreading this one copy around is going to spread it kind of thin, but look at what it appears to say. It appears to say that we are extending the hours to 6 to 12 p.m. Got it, Mr Speaker? That causes me some confusion. I presume then that we are replacing the existing hours of 1:30 to 6 with new hours of 6 to 12.

I am not even sure if that is what the House leader intended to move. I appreciate it is causing you some concern right now, Mr Speaker, and I see Liberal members rushing out to get hold of their assistants and their aides. There go three or four more rushing out the door, realizing that they have goofed up again. There go two more out through the lounge. I do not believe it. We have created a virtual exodus of Liberal members who realize that they goofed up again and they are scurrying out of here like rats, like rats out of a ship, trying to clear up a problem that they appear to have created.

I think there is a point of order down at the end here, Mr Speaker.

Mrs Sullivan: I would like to correct the record. I am standing up to correct the record. At the time of which the member spoke, the only member leaving the chamber was the House leader of his own party.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Cureatz): I was not here. We can review the cameras, the videos. It probably was not a point of order.

Mr Kormos: I am doing my very best to make the best observations that I can. I cannot help it if the member who just spoke is hard of vision and hard of hearing, as well. I appreciate that she is a little bit older than I am, but that is certainly no excuse.

Mr Speaker, I think there is another point over there. You had better catch that one.

Mr Haggerty: On a point of order: I want to bring to the attention of the Speaker "Rules of Debate," clause (i), "Imputes false or unavowed motives to another member."

The Acting Speaker: I can only advise the honourable member that I appreciate very much his advising me of the appropriate section. Now, are you referring that section to the honourable member who is speaking or to your own colleague who brought up the point of order?

Mr Haggerty: The member for Welland-Thorold.

The Acting Speaker: Then it goes back to our long discussion that we had yesterday afternoon about this particular area and, if you would like to do it, I could go at great length again to make a ruling, as I explained to the member for Brampton South. As a matter of fact, in terms of the overall approach, I do not think he has deviated too much yet from the motion that has been put, but I will listen very closely and also I will listen very closely to his language.

Mr Kormos: I am going to try to get in a couple of minutes' more comment here before somebody else stands up on a point of order. I had a point of order, you might recall, but I am prepared to defer that until we get our photocopies of the motion back in front of us.

I wonder if one of the pages can get me the Beauchesne and the Erskine May while we are at it. In the French-language versions, if they are available.

Would you not really rather be somewhere else this afternoon, Mr Speaker? Here we are on a Thursday afternoon. We were going along so nicely, at least in so far as I was concerned, about my comments regarding the Liberals' retreat, their flight, their escape by the skin of their teeth, as they hoped, from the crisis that they were bringing upon themselves by virtue of their automobile insurance legislation.

There we were, doing just fine, prepared to wrap this up in due course when it was appropriate, and then we got slapped with this dumbly worded motion that in some respects invites, on occasion, a less than serious discussion, because its semantics are sadly wanting, are they not, Mr Speaker?

I am going to operate on the presumption here that, first of all, "12 midnight" is 12 midnight and "6 pm" is the 6 o'clock six hours prior to 12 midnight. I do not understand, because they are surely speaking about the hours of meeting, and they are currently from 1:30 pm to 6 pm. The suggestion here is that they be changed from 1:30 pm to 6 pm, to 6 pm to 12 midnight. Before we get hasty about this, let's understand that people have to say what they mean and mean what they say.

My point of order is that this is slovenly worded and so obviously hastily thrown together, in so obviously a last ditch effort, panicky. Somebody speaking earlier called the Liberals paranoid, called them sneaky, right here in this House, and not one of the Liberals stood up on a point of order, having been referred to, not by myself but by another member, on the record as being paranoid. More significantly, the Liberals were referred to as being sneaky, and not a single Liberal stood up and exercised the privilege to raise a point of order and object to that language. You know what silence can suggest in those types of circumstances, Mr Speaker.

So I am wondering, Mr Speaker, if the point of order that I raise has merit in your eyes, or whether you even really want to address it.

The Acting Speaker: I am not too thrilled.

Mr Kormos: Can we defer it, then?

The Acting Speaker: No, you just keep talking about it.

Mr Kormos: I will keep talking about it. Let's get down to the nitty-gritty here. Let's get down to the nitty-gritty because I have people I know who are paying close attention to what is happening in the Legislature this afternoon who say, "What gives?" We were prepared to hear more about how pathetically, abysmally deficit Bill 68 was when it came time to protect drivers and their premiums or taxpayers and their tax dollars or victims and the compensation that they are rightly entitled to.

Those same people are tuning in and they are saying, "What gives?"

Some Liberal stands up and interrupts the member for Welland-Thorold, as they would understand it, from carrying on in his revelations as to how crummy Bill 68 really is. I do not want anybody listening—and we have to make this clear—to think that I have given up the floor on that discussion about time allocation, not by any stretch of the imagination. We have a long way to go. All that the Liberals did here with this motion is create a—

Miss Martel: Minor irritant.

1530

Mr Kormos: Not a minor irritant; a real big irritant. We are not talking about a minor detour; we are talking about a 58-mile detour, like the one I had to take once when the highway at Marathon on the Trans-Canada was washed out once again. We are not talking about an extra half-hour. When Highway 401 washes out at Marathon, you are talking about a major portage.

Mr Fleet: On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Cureatz): The honourable member for High Park-Swansea.

Mr Fleet: The member for Welland-Thorold persists in breaching, in my submission, the standing orders, specifically 23(b)(i), in that he is not dealing with "the question under discussion," which is a motion dealing with time. He has done so at least three times in the last three or four minutes: in discussing the road conditions that may or may not exist; in discussing Bill 68, which is not a part of the motion currently under debate; and in talking about the motion, which is no longer being dealt with, on time allocation. This is a motion dealing with the hours in which this House may continue to have a debate on whatever matter.

In addition, the member has been in breach, I would submit, of rule 23(c) with a needless repetition of matters, two of the three matters I have just mentioned. I followed quite carefully. It took some discipline, but I followed quite carefully the comments that were being made about the wording of the motion, discussing whether it was 1:30 to six or what the meaning was to him. It is interesting, I suppose, if one has nothing else to do, but it is none the less a repetitive procedure.

Mr Speaker, I would submit as an individual member here, although I realize it puts the House under some pressure given the circumstances, that you have a duty to cut off the member for Welland-Thorold as he does that, even without our standing to draw this to your attention, because he will of course continue, which is his avowed intention, to be repetitive, etc, as well as to breach the other matters that I raised. I understand why he is doing that. They have acknowledged it is a filibuster. I think that in the circumstances the requirement for the proper procedure of the House to be followed would call on this member to now be cut off, having been called to order in that respect, and that other members would then have the opportunity to deal with this matter, his having been repetitive and off the point of discussion several times.

Mr Wildman: Mr Speaker, I would like to make a couple of points on the point of order of the member for High Park-Swansea. First off, I should point out to you, Mr Speaker, that the member himself was repetitive in his point of order.

Second, this is very difficult to fathom and to deal with because we have to go through a veritable labyrinth of Liberal

perfidy in figuring out what exactly we are debating this afternoon. We are in fact debating a motion that would extend the time of sitting, as the member for High Park-Swansea indicated, but it is silly, I submit, to suggest that we can only, in debating this motion, talk about the hands on the clock or the number of hours in the day.

It seems to me that the purpose of this motion, if the government has a purpose in moving this motion, is to allocate additional hours to debate a matter that is before the House. The matter that is before the House, for which we are extending hours, is a time allocation motion. The time allocation motion was put on a debate on Bill 68.

Mr Reycraft: It's at the committee.

Mr Wildman: Oh yes, that is right. It is at committee of the whole House.

So it seems to me quite in order for a member speaking to this motion on additional time to deal with the fact that this additional time is apparently considered to be needed by the government to deal with a time allocation motion which deals with a committee-of-the-whole debate on Bill 68. It seems to me quite in order for the member to refer to the substance of Bill 68, which has necessitated such extensive debate in committee, which has required the government then to bring forward a time allocation motion and now to extend the time because it has realized apparently that there is indeed such full debate required that we do need more time.

The only other matter I would like to point out to you, Mr Speaker, is for the benefit for the member for Welland-Thorold. Highway 401 does not go through Marathon; it is Highway 17.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for High Park-Swansea very kindly pointed out what he felt was a point of order in terms of our standing orders and the repetitive nature of the honourable member for Welland-Thorold. I appreciate the participation of the honourable member for Algoma.

I have to tell all honourable members, as I did yesterday afternoon, about the use of language and now, more particularly, about repetitiveness in one's debate. Indeed, in my estimation, the motion itself cannot be taken in singularity in terms of the specifics of the time, six o'clock to midnight. I think it has to be taken in the overall consideration of all the matters before the House, the time allocation motion and then the matter before that again; that is, passage of Bill 68.

I also want to bring to all members' attention that members put the Speaker into a very difficult position in having to make—and I say it very bluntly—political decisions in terms of the legislation before the House. It is our role solely to try to adhere to all the standing orders before us. In doing that, I am going to have to rule that I acknowledge the concern of the honourable member for High Park-Swansea but I will allow the honourable member for Welland-Thorold to continue the debate. I will listen very closely, but I have to advise the member for High Park-Swansea that I am taking the more general approach for the debate to continue.

Mr Kormos: How could I have said Highway 401 goes through Marathon? Of course, it is the Trans-Canada Highway. Holy zonkers, Mr Speaker, forgive me.

Miss Martel: You haven't driven our highways enough.

Mr Kormos: That is right; it has been a long time since I have driven it. The last time I drove it was in a 1972 Javelin back around 1974 or 1975. It was a great year. We were on our way to the copper mines of British Columbia where we worked in the summers in an effort to finance our way through law

school, as it was. My days in the copper mines of northern BC are a subject matter of another discussion.

I do want to tell you this, Mr Speaker: If at any point I appear to you or to any other member here to be in violation of any of the rules, standing orders, bylaws or regulations, please speak up. Through you, to all the members of this assembly, I welcome their assistance. I appreciate that I am the newest member of this assembly; I have not been here as long as anybody else has been here. I am not as familiar with the rules as some of these other people are. I am as eager, though, as anyone ever could be to comply with the rules to the T. I want to operate solely within the letter of the law here.

1540

I am the last person in the world who would want to violate any of the standing orders. So if I ever do (1) I apologize in advance and (2) it is through mere inadvertence and inexperience on my part. I appreciate that understanding the many standing orders of this assembly is, at the best of times, a difficult task. That is why I have complimented you and the other Speakers of this assembly. I have complimented you for your thorough grasp of all the rules, all the standing orders, all the nuances and all the subtleties that are associated with them. I have tried to read the rules, and somehow I just cannot absorb them as readily as I can, let's say, the broader propositions contained in Beauchesne and Erskine May.

I thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I thank the member for High Park-Swansea for his interjection. I would admonish him not to be so boring next time he rises on a point of order. None the less, I listened carefully while he was making his point of order, notwithstanding that we are at sort of opposite extremes here in the Legislature. Here I am, right up beside the Speaker; there he is, just way off, so far away. He is there, but he is just so far off in the corner, at the other extreme of the House. I understand who he is now, but were it not for the Speaker having identified him for me, looking at the players chart that we have, the program, the schematic of the House, I would not have known who was trying to be so helpful.

So I apologize for my inadvertence that gave rise to that person, that member, that Liberal from the opposite extreme of the House, the member for High Park-Swansea, I sincerely apologize for my conduct that gave rise to his interjection by way of a point of order. I apologize to you, Mr Speaker, and I apologize to the other members of the assembly. I apologize to the member for Hamilton Mountain, who is sitting beside me, for my breach of the guidelines. I apologize to the other members of my caucus, to the members of the third party, the Conservative caucus. I apologize to the Liberals here for my breach of the rules. I will make every effort not to do it again. It is all a matter of perception. In some people's minds, by virtue of my trying to explain why we are opposing this particular motion, that was perceived as a breach of the rules. I not only do not want to breach the rules; I do not even want to be perceived as breaching the rules.

Now, I guess that poses two options for me. To avoid that perception, I suppose I could just sit down and stop addressing this issue. Then I would not run any risk of even appearing to breach the rules. But that would be the coward's way out, would it not? That would not be fulfilling one's duty as a member of this assembly. No, our duty is to address the issues. Our obligations are to express the arguments that we believe are appropriate, even if it means risking being seen as breaching the rules. When one has to weigh which is the more important role, I say, and I know you understand this and I know you will agree

with me, Mr Speaker, it is far preferable to risk, on occasion, being seen as breaching the rules than it is to shirk one's responsibility. Is that a fair enough comment, Mr Speaker? I appreciate your saying that.

I move on to where we were before. As I say, there are people who expected to see a discussion about Bill 68, and we have to explain that we are not discussing Bill 68, just as we were not when we were forced into discussing time allocation. The whole beginning of this series of stumbling blocks—again, talk about filibuster. I looked up “filibuster” in the Oxford English Dictionary. There are a number of archaic English usages of the word, none of which mean the American filibuster. In short, I was surprised that filibuster, in the American sense, meant to obstruct legislation, to impede legislation. Well, here we are. It is necessary in the parliamentary system, as I understand it, to debate legislation before it is voted upon. The whole thrust of our position in the New Democratic Party has been to debate, to want to debate, Bill 68. The only time the Liberals have ever stood up and objected during the discussion about time allocation over the last two weeks, or during the discussion now about this new motion, is when we have, according to them, wandered or ventured into a debate about Bill 68. That is, to be honest, all that we have ever really wanted to do.

We do not want to have to debate time allocation motions. We do not want to have to debate motions arbitrarily and unfairly extending the hours of the House. However, we are going to talk quite frankly about how unfair it is to extend the hours of the House. There are a whole lot of people here whose stamina just is not such that they can sit from 1:30 in the afternoon through until midnight. There are some people here of more mature years than mine and I appreciate that. Again, I am not 27 any more. I am far closer to 40 than I am to 30 and I know that I just cannot do things at my age that I could do 10 years ago in terms of stamina, long hours. I cannot work a double shift any more. It is so grossly unfair to so many members of this assembly to require them to sit at their desks from 1:30 in the afternoon through to midnight, is it not? We are going to talk about that, as to why members of this assembly ought to oppose this legislation.

We are going to talk about the standing orders in a few minutes as well. To finish up on that first thought, that first little line of discussion, people are expecting to see a discussion of Bill 68. The public is expecting to see a discussion of Bill 68. All they knew, with great fear, was that this Legislature was going to vote on this auto insurance scheme; with great fear because the public out there, the people in cities and towns and all over Ontario are scared out of their wits that Bill 68 is going to pass. They are just scared to death that the Liberals are going to vote for Bill 68, and that is why they have been—and I know this—watching these proceedings on their cable TV, anxious to see a debate about Bill 68, anxious to see the realities of Bill 68 exposed with the view in mind of having as many Liberals as at all possible vote against it so that it is defeated.

These are the people who have been calling and phoning Queen's Park every day. These are people like Maureen Duffy from Kitchener, who phoned in with the message, and I appreciate her comments: “Peter, you're doing a great job. Keep it up.” I appreciate that and we will. Mr Byard from Mississauga, who calls with his congratulations on our stand as the opposition against Bill 68. A fellow by the name of Michael Heller called, again encouraging the opposition position on Bill 68, encouraging us to carry on until Bill 68 is defeated.

There is nothing wrong with doing that, is there? There is nothing wrong with knowing that a piece of legislation is so thoroughly bad, so thoroughly dangerous that it must be defeated. There is nothing wrong, is there, with persisting in telling a Liberal majority that debate is a cornerstone of democracy and that the debate must take place in an orderly, structured way. And how can that debate be orderly and structured when it is expected to last from 1:30 in the afternoon until 12 midnight every day of the week? We are going to talk about that more, too. How can that debate be a meaningful one when—let me suggest this to you, Mr Speaker: You want to know the real reason why this motion has been put forward? Do you really want to know? You, like so many other people, do want to know the real reason.

1550

It is because thousands and thousands of people in Ontario—they cannot fit in the visitors' galleries up here, can they? The few people who have an opportunity to come to Queen's Park and see what is going on, to see their members not doing anything, they look and they say: "Sure, there's our member, right over there. He's not moving. My gosh, look closer. He may not be breathing. Oh, we saw the newspaper rustle. Sure enough, he's sitting at his desk."

These people from across Ontario say: "There's our member, but does he participate in the debate? No. Does he barely nod his head? No. But when it comes time for a vote, what does he do? He looks up and says: 'What does the House leader say? What instructions do we have today as to how to vote on this issue? What can I do today to blindly follow what we are being instructed to do by our House leader?'"

Very few people have the opportunity to come here and see their member in action, or inaction, as the case may be. Most people have to rely on the TV coverage, and that is a relatively new phenomenon, the TV cameras that are controlled by virtue of the regulations in the standing orders—very rigid control—which prescribe what can and cannot be filmed.

Those TV cameras are the visitor's gallery for the millions and millions and millions of people in Ontario. Those TV cameras, utilizing the technology available to us in the 1980s and now the 1990s, avoid the restriction that the distance of Queen's Park from most of Ontario creates. Those TV cameras avoid the limitations that there are on seating here in our visitor's galleries. Look how crowded they are. Look how difficult it would be for any more people to find places to sit here in these visitor's galleries. My goodness, they are packed, yet even at that it is but a handful of people who have been able to come to listen to what happens in this august place. The TV cameras here at Queen's Park constitute the real visitor's gallery for the vast majority of Ontario citizens, those people who are going to be affected by things like Bill 68.

If the members think people are not watching, they had better check around. If they think people do not take advantage of the televised proceedings at Queen's Park, they had better look around. If they think people are not paying attention and looking forward to what would be happening the next day, they had better ask around, because they do and they are. I am going to read the members some letters later from people who have been watching on a regular basis.

Those TV cameras are the windows to democracy. The TV cameras are how people across Ontario get a chance to see what is going on at Queen's Park. The TV cameras are how people get a chance to know what the issues are and whose side people are on. It is those TV cameras that have let the people of On-

tario know that the Liberals have sold out the people of Ontario in favour of the profit interests of the private corporate insurance industry. We know that.

Even Mr Justice Haines, in his letter—the members will recall our discussion of that. Remember yesterday and the day before when we talked about Mr Justice Haines' critique of Bill 68? Even Mr Justice Haines—and nobody is going to suggest, and of course they should not, that he is some wild-eyed radical, of course not. He is a very competent, skilled and learned member of our bar and of our bench, now retired, with a wealth of experience behind him. Even he pointed out that the inevitable perception when it comes to this Liberal auto insurance scheme is that the Liberals sold out the little guy in favour of the big insurance companies, the big, wealthy insurance companies.

Again, people had a chance to hear that argument, to hear that position, to note that observation or hear that conclusion when they used their television sets to plug themselves into what is happening at Queen's Park.

The Liberals are deathly afraid and the Liberals want to silence the opposition. The inference that can be properly drawn is that they would like to shut down these visitors' galleries too.

The agenda of the Liberal Party, of this Liberal government, was undertaken in the course of secret studies during the course of 1989 when it conducted \$250,000 worth of actuarial studies which were finally forced out of them on 6 February 1990. Remember, Mr Speaker, how the opposition had to fight to get the release of those secret documents, the secret documents that were really part of the design to establish this threshold insurance here in Ontario, the ones that told the government—and finally, when we obtained them on 6 February, told us—that this insurance scheme was going to generate a \$1-billion payday for the auto insurance industry?

That was done in secret. That was done in the back rooms. That was done without public scrutiny. That was done without visitors' galleries. That was done without TV cameras.

Those TV cameras are crucial to the proper operation of a parliamentary House. I tell you, Mr Speaker, the whole purpose behind this motion is to interfere with the public's scrutiny of what happens here at Queen's Park. It is to make sure that question period cannot be replayed at 6:30 or 7 at night when people get home from work, finish their dinners and sit down in front of their television sets so they can watch question period and listen to the Minister of Financial Institutions mumble, stammer and just knock about and refuse to answer questions from the Leader of the Opposition.

Is that not the real reason why this motion is being brought here and now, to make sure that people do not have access through their television sets to what happens during question period because the performance of the Liberals during question period has grown so dismal, so pathetic?

Mr Polsinelli: Mr Speaker, he is alleging motives, contrary to the standing orders.

Mr Kormos: No, I am talking qualitative here. I am talking about dismal performances. I am talking about just abysmal conduct. I am talking about the inability to respond to even the most basic inquiries about how crummy this government is in handling some very fundamental issues here in Ontario. So it is not inappropriate to explain that one cannot divorce a discussion of this motion and a discussion of Bill 68 itself.

Before we do that, let's take a look at Erskine May. Chapter 15 talks about the control and distribution of time in the House of Commons. I appreciate that that is the House of Commons

and we are dealing here with the provincial Legislature, but I am suggesting that many of the principles talked about here in Erskine May as applicable to the House of Commons, are equally applicable to what is happening at Queen's Park.

1600

Let's talk for the briefest of moments—because the hours of this House were from 1:30 to 6 pm by the time I got here to represent the people of Welland-Thorold, it was only through anecdote that I could understand and discover what went on when the House had evening sittings. I have had occasion since I have been here in the last year and a half or so to talk to all sorts of members of this Legislature who were here when this House was sitting in the evenings who told me about the conduct of Liberal members and the conduct of Conservative members as they sat into the late evening hours without the scrutiny of television, having gone out to wherever it is they used to go out to when the House sat late for their dinners. The reference to transcripts will demonstrate to you, Mr Speaker, and to the members of this assembly how inappropriate extended hours like that indeed are.

As I say, talking about extended hours necessarily compels us to talk about Bill 68 and the reason that the Liberals want to avoid any discussion about Bill 68 and would rather interfere by bringing these secondary motions. So let's talk about Bill 68, and more important, why the Liberals do not want to discuss Bill 68 but want to persist in throwing monkey-wrenches into the procedure, because some Liberals, the ones who are calling the shots, really know far more about Bill 68 than they would let on.

They know that under Bill 68, if a person is injured in a car accident, that person would lose his or her right to sue for damages unless that person sustained a catastrophic physical injury and that the loss of that right to sue is not accompanied by any reduction in premium. Indeed, premiums are going to go up by 50 per cent. The Minister of Financial Institutions told us that.

So not only will there be a substantial loss of a right to sue, which means a right to be compensated, so there is going to be a substantial impact on the right to be compensated, what we know is that 95 per cent of innocent injured accident victims will not be entitled to any compensation for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life. We know that now, and the public is becoming increasingly aware of that.

So you lose your right to sue, and more important, you lose your right to be compensated for pain and suffering and loss of enjoyment of life. Yet, at the same time, premiums will go up by as much as 50 per cent, and similarly—members should listen to this, please—more and more people are going to be forced into Facility Association.

I am disappointed. This is damnable. These Liberals bring their motion this afternoon, they prevent any petitions being presented, one of the most fundamental rights that a member has and an obligation that that member has to his constituents, they bring their crummy motion in and they will not even satisfy a quorum. Come on, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1606

The Acting Speaker: The table has advised me that a quorum is now present.

Mr Kormos: The importance about a quorum is that it eliminates the need for me to repeat things when I see new

members come in. One of the difficult things is that members are sitting here, they pick up half of an argument, and then they wander off to their little caucus room across the hall. Lord only knows what they are doing there, but they wander off to their little caucus room and then a new bunch comes in. Then I have to start over again. Then more people leave and then they wander back here from their little caucus room. Why they could not have sat here rather than sitting in their caucus room, I do not know. Then I have to start over again.

That is pretty frustrating, and it is not fair to the people who are paying close attention. It is just not fair at all to the people who are paying attention to what is being said, because they have to listen to things that are repeated twice or three times, just to accommodate the Liberals who are not interested. These Liberals want to sit until midnight. They cannot even sit through a half-hour of the introduction to our opposition to this crummy motion.

Let me tell members what else happens along with Bill 68, and let me tell them exactly why the Liberals want this discussed into the late hours of the night when people can no longer watch. It is just not fair to working people. People out there want to see what is happening in their Parliament. This may be news to some of the members here, but when you work in a plant and you have got to be there at 6:30 or 7 in the morning, you do not go to bed at midnight or 1 am, you go to bed at 9:30 or 10. That is the real world.

These Liberals want to have an important debate like the auto insurance debate—because they know that they cannot win their time allocation motion. Look what is happening. They have a time allocation motion on the floor. They interrupt the debate of that time allocation motion with a motion to extend the sittings of the House because they, the Liberals, know that people are going to vote against that time allocation motion. The Liberals know that. The Liberals know that even their own ranks are going to feel compelled to vote against that time allocation motion. The Liberals know that. The Liberals sitting over here on the rump know that even their own ranks are going to vote against that time allocation motion.

Now they are panicking. They do not know what direction to turn now and they say, "My goodness, if the time allocation motion doesn't work, then maybe we'd better restructure the hours of the sitting of the House so the debate has to take place late at night," when hardworking people cannot watch it any more. Right, Mr Speaker? I know that. So do you. So do they.

The problem is that by the time we are finished presenting all the arguments against the hour extension so that people would have to stay up until midnight to watch what is going on, then these very same Liberals would be satisfied that that is the wrong direction to go in too. They will be aware of the errors of their ways.

1610

Let me tell the members one of the things that the Liberals do not want to see debated during reasonable hours so that people can listen to it. They do not want to debate the proposition, because it is true, that if Bill 68 passes, if this new insurance scheme is permitted to become law, senior citizens are going to be victimized. Senior citizens across Ontario are going to be forced into multithousand-dollar insurance premiums. That is the saddest thing that one could really ever consider, that these Liberals would condemn senior citizens in Ontario to insurance premiums of thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars.

How do we know that? We know it because Mr Justice Osborne in his analysis of Bill 68 said that. We know that Mr Justice Osborne explains that the Facility Association ranks are going to swell by virtue of Bill 68 being passed and that among those people who are going to contribute to the huge increases in Facility are going to be senior citizens, because under Bill 68 insurance companies are still going to have the right to arbitrarily deny insurance to any customer, and among those people who are going to be most readily denied insurance coverage are senior citizens. Is that not correct? Seniors are going to be condemned to the Facility Association.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: I see the member for Yorkview over there with a look of amazement and horror on his face, and I suspect he has his own grandmother—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: It grieves me to mention to the honourable member for Yorkview that I had reprimanded the honourable member for Welland-Thorold yesterday that for too long I had let him carry on with anecdotes in terms of suggesting that other members are lying or misleading the House.

Now the problem is that when you are in the Speaker's chair, one can try to avoid extraneous comments, because the Speaker is paying attention, albeit I am sure to other members that think we are sitting here dozing. But I can assure you, under these trying situations, we are paying a great deal of attention to everything that is being said because, from time to time, we are called upon to make decisions that can be of severe consequences to the House.

That brings me to the point of my having heard you indicate that the honourable member for Welland-Thorold to a degree of some nature was lying or lying again. I have to tell you, as I said to the honourable member for Welland-Thorold yesterday and the day before, I am going to get very strict about that kind of language, as I am with you and I am going to ask you to withdraw the comment.

Mr Polsinelli: I did not indicate that the member for Welland-Thorold was lying. I simply said, "You are not lying, are you?"

The Acting Speaker: No, you did not. You can check again. You said, "Is the honourable member lying again?"

Mr Polsinelli: No, no, no, no. Far be it.

The Acting Speaker: Are you going to—

Mr Polsinelli: Far be it from me to question your judgment.

The Acting Speaker: Then you are going to stand up and retract.

Mr Polsinelli: Well, Mr Speaker, if that is what you heard, that is definitely not what I thought I had said. But the member for Welland-Thorold is using such farfetched examples that one would strain the imagination to know whether or not he is telling the truth. If it is misinterpreted to the effect that I am perceived to have been alleging that he is lying, I withdraw that unquestionably.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member a great deal.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I should mention very briefly, here is the member for Yorkview once again sitting

there like an illustration from a Kurt Vonnegut Jr novel, and he wants to make comments. I welcome them.

The members have never heard me stand up on a point of order about what any of these Liberals would interject, because I know that my position and my arguments about Bill 68 will withstand criticism, even the criticism of a dullard. So I am not concerned about criticism that might be thrown at the arguments that I present in opposition to Bill 68.

Mr Polsinelli: The member is using words he does not understand.

Mr Kormos: I am not concerned at all. Members have never seen me rise on a point of order saying, "Oh, he said something nasty." Let them say what they will because we know whose interests they are presenting here at Queen's Park.

We know that the Liberals are fighting tooth and nail to protect the profits of the auto insurance industry. We know that those profits are going to be enhanced to the tune of \$1 billion in the first years alone if this auto insurance legislation become law, and we also know that that is why the Liberals do not want to see it discussed during the regular business hours of this Legislature. We know that.

What we were talking about—and I guess it is as much by way of a warning to senior citizens—was senior citizens across Ontario who are going to be forced into Facility Association. Of course, the Liberal members want to resist that suggestion. They are fighting right now to make sure that the issue does not even get debated. Of course, they want to resist that suggestion because their interest, the interest of Liberals, is the profits of big insurance corporations.

I am going to be candid with members. We are not overly concerned about the profits of big insurance companies. They are doing quite well on their own, thank you. We are concerned about what happens to senior citizens once this legislation, Bill 68, becomes law.

We are concerned with what Mr Justice Osborne, a judge of the Supreme Court of Ontario, said when he explained in December 1989, just a few months ago, that if Bill 68 becomes law, that if this threshold, so-called no-fault insurance scheme of the Liberals is allowed to pass, more and more senior citizens, whether or not they are good drivers, are going to be forced into Facility Association where the premiums are literally in the thousands and thousands of dollars.

We know the Facility Association in itself has soared in terms of the numbers being forced into it, not because they are bad drivers but because they are seniors, and because Bill 68 permits insurance companies to continue to cherry-pick, if you will, or high-grade, if you want to use another term. If people without collateral benefits provided by employers present themselves to an insurer, they are going to be told by that insurer, "No thank you, sir or madam, we do not want to cover you," and senior citizens are going to be precisely among those classes of people.

Not only did Mr Justice Osborne explain that, but Facility Association's own general manager explained that. Don McKay, in his third-quarter report covering the period up to 31 July 1989, indicated that what is going to happen is this. He said:

"The no-fault scheme"—the so-called no-fault scheme that the Liberals are trying to ram through—"will create a new class of borderline risks, and if the legislation proceeds as it is presently drafted, it is highly likely that underwriters"—that means the insurers—"will use avoidance tactics on such classes as seasonal workers, self-employed contractors, unskilled

labourers, workers in the hospitality sector, other similar occupations," those people who do not have collateral benefits provided by their employer because these collateral benefits employer-provided are the ones that subsidize the insurance company's responsibility in terms of its insured person.

Those classes of persons include, once again, senior citizens, just like Judge Osborne of the Supreme Court of Ontario said. Judge Osborne is not unaware of what insurance means in the province of Ontario, because Judge Osborne was the author of the report commissioned by this government on insurance in the province of Ontario. Mr Justice Osborne of the Supreme Court of Ontario, in preparing the Osborne report, condemned the type of insurance that the government would propose to impose upon us through Bill 68 and pointed out that it would not reduce premiums.

Indeed, we know now that premiums, if this bill passes, are going to rise by as much as 50 per cent. More and more people who are good drivers, not bad drivers but good drivers, including senior citizens, small business people, farmers, young people and single women, can be forced into the Facility Association. Just watch and see, but by then it will be too late for so many drivers in Ontario.

1620

By then it will be too late because they will have been hit with premium increases in the thousands and thousands of dollars. The Liberals will have rammed through insurance legislation that denies 95 per cent of all innocent injured accident victims any compensation for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life.

The sad thing is that the Minister of Financial Institutions would not even participate in the standing committee on general government hearings. He sent the member for Guelph, his parliamentary assistant. The member for Guelph is sent out there—

Mr Mahoney: Pretty good guy.

Mr Kormos: Indeed, not a bad guy at all, but he knew diddly-squat about the insurance bill. Day after day after day, the member for Guelph was asked questions and the parliamentary assistant had to confess that he was in no position to answer them.

The parliamentary assistant was not privy to the backroom workings between the Minister of Financial Institutions, the Premier of Ontario and the auto insurance industry in Ontario. If the parliamentary assistant was there, if he did participate in those backroom hearings, he should say so right here and now. But we hear not a word from him; we do not hear a word from him.

In a brief spurt of candour and frankness, the parliamentary assistant said this to the press after a particularly trying week in Sudbury among other places: "The Liberals got hammered by the opposition to this auto insurance bill." The parliamentary assistant said that, and he was quoted in headlines in newspapers. His kids, the kids of that same Liberal member for Guelph, were saying, "Daddy made it into the papers." They were clipping it and taking it to show and tell. They were saying, "Look, daddy says the Liberals got hammered at the auto insurance committee hearings."

Mr Haggerty: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I want to bring to the Chair again the rules of debate, clause (i), "Imputes false or unavowed motives to another member." Call the member to order.

The Deputy Speaker: The member may proceed and be more careful.

Mr Kormos: There you go. The old clipping service is working overtime. The member for Guelph, the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions, says, "The Liberals got hammered." I know what he was talking about. This was not any code language. The Liberals got hammered by the opposition.

The member for Guelph is a heck of a nice guy. I have said that again and again and again. He is a great guy. What a cruel thing for the Minister of Financial Institutions to have sent the member for Guelph out into the front to take all the flak over this new insurance scheme, when the minister hid away in his bunker. The parliamentary assistant indeed took the flak.

The problem is that they had to report back to the minister that they got hammered, that the opposition to Bill 68 is overwhelming, that people across Ontario are saying no to Bill 68 and that organizations across Ontario are saying no to Bill 68. At some point during this discussion, I am going to list all the organizations that said no to Bill 68.

Mr Faubert: I have no problem remembering what you have said. You have said it 15 times.

Mr Kormos: Page, could you come up here please and take this pencil over to the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere so that he can write these down? He has problems remembering them. There is an eraser on that pencil, Mr Speaker, because we know the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere is prone to making mistakes.

Mr Faubert: The biggest mistake I made was coming in today.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: I have talked about what this legislation does. It takes away the right of 95 per cent of all innocent injured accident victims to be compensated for pain and suffering, for loss of enjoyment of life. It creates uncertainty. What happens is that even if you are seriously injured to the extent that you pass the test that permits you to sue—that is the threshold—in most cases there will be great uncertainty as to whether or not you pass that test.

That uncertainty will make it very difficult for people to get a lawyer who would be prepared to take on the case without a substantial retainer. Those are the sort of problems that thousands and thousands of innocent injured people are going to encounter, because that lawyer would be unable to risk spending time and money with the chance that that victim could recover nothing.

The Deputy Speaker: All that is related, of course, to extending hours?

Mr Kormos: Of course. Exactly. You were not here, Mr Speaker, when I talked about the theme that is going to permeate, that is going to be the golden thread throughout this initial stage of argument. The Liberals want the debate about auto insurance. They know that their time allocation motion will not fly. They know that the argument against time allocation is so persuasive that even Liberals are going to vote against it.

Those Liberals who can muster integrity are going to vote against time allocation. Those Liberals who are going to be representing their constituents' interests are going to vote against time allocation. Those Liberals who are not going to continue to act merely for the wealthy, powerful insurance companies are going to vote against time allocation.

The government does not want to take any chances. The government, the Liberals, know that there is a big chance that the time allocation motion may not fly. So what do they do? They bring this crummy motion before the House, because they want to see that Bill 68 debate taking place in the late hours of the evening so that the public across Ontario cannot witness it.

The Liberals are so ashamed of their sellout of drivers and victims and taxpayers that they want to have the debate about it take place at 11 and 11:30 and 11:45 at night when hardworking people are getting ready for bed because they have got to get up and work in the mornings. They have to get up at 5 and 5:30 in the mornings to be prepared for their 7 o'clock or 7:30 shift. That commences early, early in the day.

When we are talking about this motion, there are a whole bunch of other things to talk about. We could talk about the problems of having to stay here between 6 pm and midnight. That is going to be discussed as well. There are a whole number of things that are going to be discussed.

Think of how unfair it would be to these pages. Think for a minute of how unfair it will be to these pages. This particular group of pages are serving their last day here at Queen's Park today. This particular group of pages has been an outstanding group of young people, has been extremely helpful to all of us sitting here in this Legislature. They are about as bright a group of pages as we have ever had.

This group of pages serving today their last day here at Queen's Park is an impressive group of kids who are going to do really well for themselves and make great contributions to their own communities. I will bet money on that right now. They are bright kids, they are hardworking kids, they have been

a cheerful bunch and they have been a real pleasure to have here at Queen's Park.

Having said that, and wishing, I am sure on behalf of all of us, each and every one of these young people well and hoping that they come back to visit from time to time, I do move adjournment of this debate.

On motion by Mr Kormos, the debate was adjourned.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Mr Ward: Pursuant to standing order 53, business for the upcoming week is as follows:

Monday 16 April is Easter Monday and therefore a holiday; Tuesday 17 April, we will deal with any previously unfinished business of the week of 9 April, which includes second and third readings of Pr Bills 8, 36, 40, 44, 47, 49, 55, 57, 58, 61 and 62, debate on government notice of motion 30, committee of the whole House on Bill 68; Wednesday, any previously unfinished business, including second reading debate of Bills 16, 107, 108, 106 and 114, which I should have included on Tuesday's list; Thursday 19 April, private members' ballot items 43 and 44.

I would like to advise, though, that some changes may be forthcoming. The afternoon sitting will be any previously unfinished business.

Just prior to moving adjournment of the House, I would like to acknowledge, as has the member of Welland-Thorold, that this is the last day for the pages. We wish them well. We hope they have a happy Easter. As always, it has been a pleasure to have them here to help and serve us.

The House adjourned at 1630.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

| | |
|--|---|
| Adams, Peter (Peterborough L) | Grandmaître, Bernard C. (Ottawa East L) |
| Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP) | Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP) |
| Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L) | Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L) |
| Beer, Hon Charles , Minister of Community and Social Services (York North L) | Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP) |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. , Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L) | Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC) |
| Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L) | Hart, Hon Christine E. , Minister of Culture and Communications (York East L) |
| Bradley, Hon James J. , Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L) | Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L) |
| Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC) | Hošek, Chaviva (Oakwood L) |
| Breaugh, Michael J., First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House (Oshawa NDP) | Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC) |
| Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L) | Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC) |
| Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP) | Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP) |
| Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L) | Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L) |
| Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L) | Kerrio, Vincent G. (Niagara Falls L) |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor , Minister of Health (Oriele L) | Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L) |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L) | Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP) |
| Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP) | Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L) |
| Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L) | Kwinter, Hon Monte , Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L) |
| Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L) | Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP) |
| Collins, Hon Shirley , Minister without Portfolio (Wentworth East L) | LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L) |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. , Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development (Renfrew North L) | Leone, Laureano (Downsview L) |
| Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L) | Lipsett, Ron (Grey L) |
| Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP) | Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L) |
| Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L) | MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L) |
| Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC) | Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP) |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC) | Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L) |
| Cureatz, Sam L., Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House (Durham East PC) | Mancini, Hon Remo , Minister of Revenue (Essex South L) |
| Curling, Alvin (Scarborough North L) | Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC) |
| Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L) | Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP) |
| Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L) | Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L) |
| Eakins, John F. (Victoria-Haliburton L) | McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC) |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. , Speaker (Perth L) | McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L) |
| Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L) | McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L) |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. , Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L) | McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC) |
| Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L) | McLeod, Hon Lyn , Minister of Energy and Minister of Natural Resources (Fort William L) |
| Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC) | Miclash, Frank (Kenora L) |
| Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP) | Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L) |
| Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L) | Morin, Hon Gilles E. , Minister without Portfolio (Carleton East L) |
| Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L) | Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste Marie NDP) |
| Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L) | Neumann, David E. (Brantford L) |
| Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L) | Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L) |
| Fontaine, Hon René , Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L) | Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L) |
| Fulton, Ed (Scarborough East L) | Nixon, Hon Robert F. , Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L) |
| Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L) | Oddie Munro, Lily (Hamilton Centre L) |
| | Offer, Hon Steven , Solicitor General (Mississauga North L) |
| | O'Neil, Hon Hugh P. , Minister of Mines (Quinte L) |
| | O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L) |
| | Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L) |

Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Correctional Services
(Ottawa Centre L)

Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)

Peterson, Hon David R., Premier and President of the Council
and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
(London Centre L)

Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)

Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Labour
(Scarborough-Agincourt L)

Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of
the Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)

Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)

Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)

Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)

Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)

Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)

Rae, Bob (York South NDP)

Ramsay, Hon David, Minister of Agriculture and Food
(Timiskaming L)

Ray, Michael C. (Windsor-Walkerville L)

Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)

Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Riddell, Jack (Huron L)

Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)

Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)

Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)

Scott, Hon Ian G., Attorney General (St George-St David L)

Smith, David W. (Lambton L)

Smith, E. Joan (London South L)

Sola, John (Mississauga East L)

Sorbara, Hon Gregory S., Minister of Consumer and
Commercial Relations (York Centre L)

South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)

Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)

Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)

Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)

Sweeney, Hon John, Minister of Housing and Minister of
Municipal Affairs (Kitchener-Wilmot L)

Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)

Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Ward, Hon Christopher C., Minister of Government Services
(Wentworth North L)

Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)

Wilson, Hon Mavis, Minister without Portfolio
(Dufferin-Peel L)

Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

Wong, Hon Robert C., Minister of Citizenship (Fort York L)

Wrye, Hon William, Minister of Transportation
(Windsor-Sandwich L)

Vacant, Ottawa South

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Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the
first sitting day of each month.*

CONTENTS

Thursday 12 April 1990

Private members' public business

| | |
|---|-----|
| Assistance to farmers, resolution 46 | 541 |
| Mr Wildman | 541 |
| Mr Villeneuve | 542 |
| Mr Dietsch | 543 |
| Mr Kormos | 544 |
| Mr McLean | 545 |
| Mr Riddell | 546 |
| Mr Reyecraft | 547 |
| Mr McGuigan | 546 |
| Mr J. M. Johnson | 546 |
| Agreed to | 554 |
| Children's mental health services, resolution 47 | 547 |
| Mr Brandt | 548 |
| Mrs O'Neill | 549 |
| Mr Allen | 550 |
| Mrs Cunningham | 551 |
| Mr Keyes | 552 |
| Mrs Grier | 553 |
| Mr Eves | 553 |
| Agreed to | 555 |

Members' statements

| | |
|--|-----|
| Plant closures | 556 |
| Mr Farnan | |
| Gerry Crowe | 556 |
| Mrs Marland | |
| Sisters of St Joseph | 556 |
| Mr Adams | |
| Workers' Compensation Board | 556 |
| Miss Martel | |
| Inmates' mental health services | 557 |
| Mr Cureatz | |
| Larissa Lowing and Lisa Flood | 557 |
| Mrs Stoner | |
| Rent regulation | 557 |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | |
| Ukrainian Catholic Church | 557 |
| Mr Jackson | |
| Multiple sclerosis | 557 |
| Mr Mahoney | |

Statement by the ministry

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Budget | 558 |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |

Responses

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Budget | 558 |
| Mr Laughren | |
| Mr Brandt | |
| Mr Villeneuve | |

Oral questions

| | |
|--|-----|
| Automobile insurance | 559 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mr Elston | |
| Social assistance | 560 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Mr Allen | |
| Cardiovascular care | 561 |
| Mr Eves | |
| Mrs Caplan | |
| Automobile insurance | 562 |
| Mr Runciman | |
| Mr Elston | |
| Ambulance services | 563 |
| Mr Mackenzie | |
| Mrs Caplan | |
| Commercial concentration levy | 563 |
| Mr Cousens | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Plant closure | 564 |
| Mr Tatham | |
| Mr Phillips | |
| Corporate tax | 564 |
| Mr Laughren | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Waste disposal | 565 |
| Mr McLean | |
| Mr Bradley | |
| Home care | 565 |
| Mr Sola | |
| Mrs Caplan | |
| Great Lakes water quality | 565 |
| Mrs Grier | |
| Mr Bradley | |
| Automobile insurance | 566 |
| Mr Villeneuve | |
| Mr Elston | |

Government motion

| | |
|---|-----|
| Extension of House hours | 567 |
| Mr Ward | 567 |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | 567 |
| Mr Eves | 568 |
| Mr Offer | 568 |
| Mr Sterling | 568 |
| Mr Kormos | 569 |
| Mr Fleet | 571 |
| Mr Wildman | 571 |
| Mr Polsinelli | 573 |
| Adjourned | 577 |

Other business

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Afternoon sitting | 556 |
| Constitutional accord | 567 |
| Mr Eves | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Business of the House | 577 |
| Mr Ward | |
| Adjournment | 577 |
| Alphabetical list of members | 578 |



17 90

17 90

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 17 April 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le mardi 17 avril 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 17 April 1990

The House met at 1333.

Prayers.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker: I would like to inform all members that we have a new group of legislative pages here to serve in the spring session of the 34th Parliament. They are:

Danielle Appleton, Perth; Jennifer Bell, Cambridge; Shannon Bourassa, Carleton East; Jamie Brown, York North; Neil Buie, Algoma-Manitoulin; Stephen Cho, Sault Ste Marie; Celine Cooper, Brantford; Deanna Cosgrove, Lake Nipigon; Rion Cureatz, Durham East; Brian Fleming, Etobicoke-Humber; Matthew Fox, High Park-Swansea; Jennifer Gray, Don Mills; Megan Harrison, Guelph; Jeffrey Heaton, Prince Edward-Lennox; David Macdonald, Windsor-Riverside; Becky Neal, Oxford; Jennifer Odle, Scarborough West; Bobbi-Jo Osmond, Mississauga East; Samuel Rogers, Ottawa-Rideau; Deanah Shelly, Prescott and Russell; Paul St Marseille, Sudbury; Tim Stone, Beaches-Woodbine; Nawaz Tahir, London North; Jodi Van Raay, Chatham-Kent.

Please join me in welcoming our new pages.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The Speaker: On Tuesday 10 April 1990, the government House leader, on the calling of motions during routine proceedings, rose to move the following motion: "That this House do pass to the orders of the day." Immediately following this, arguments were heard by the Deputy Speaker from the House leaders of the two opposition parties as to the procedural acceptability of this motion.

The Deputy Speaker, after hearing all arguments, undertook to review the matter and report back to the House. The following day, all three House leaders, arguing that this was a totally new procedure in the Ontario Legislature, gave further arguments for and against the appropriateness of this motion. The Deputy Speaker then again reserved his decision. I have had a chance to review all of the comments made and I thank the honourable members for bringing this to the attention of the House. I would also like to thank the Deputy Speaker, who waited until I had returned to the House in order that I could also contribute to this decision.

In considering the arguments before me, I have arrived at the conclusion that this matter must meet three criteria. The first one is whether or not there is an applicable standing order in this case. After studying the matter, I have determined that there is not. Therefore, standing order 1(b) can be applied. The second consideration is whether this is a legitimate procedural motion in parliamentary tradition. In trying to arrive at a conclusion on this point, I have studied the application of this rule in Ottawa at the House of Commons and at Westminster. The motion is in great use in Ottawa. Its standing order is as follows:

"Standing order 59. A motion for reading the orders of the day shall have preference to any motion before the House."

That rule has always been in Ottawa's standing orders and it is routinely used for the purpose of stopping a proceeding and moving on to the orders of the day. The following quote from Beauchesne's *Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, second edition,

1927, at page 70, probably gives the best description of this rule:

"235. This motion cannot be debated nor amended. If it is resolved in the affirmative, the original motion is superseded and the House must proceed at once to the orders of the day.

"236. The motion for reading the orders of the day is more particularly one that is taken up on routine proceedings."

At Westminster, the application of this motion has nearly disappeared because a general time limit has now been set on the whole of routine proceedings before orders of the day. In conclusion of this criterion and more precisely on the application of the rule as we know it in Ottawa, I am satisfied that I can conclude that this is a legitimate procedural motion in use today.

The third criterion is whether this legitimate procedural motion can be applied to our procedures at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Again, during my research on this ruling and also during the arguments by the honourable members, it has come to my attention that this standing order in effect did exist at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario for over 100 years in exactly the same terms. For example, standing order 29 in 1970 read as follows:

"A motion for reading the orders of the day shall have preference of any motion before the House."

This rule was removed from the standing orders in 1978. In researching why it had been abandoned, I have satisfied myself that it was mainly because it had never been used. I must conclude, therefore, that this legitimate procedural motion did and can fit into the context of the Legislative Assembly's procedures. In conclusion, therefore, I must find that the motion put by the honourable House leader the other day was in order but, because it has never been used before in this place, I would like to set out for honourable members an exact description of what this motion is, who can move it and at what time.

1340

The motion that this House proceed to the orders of the day is a tactical motion. It is a procedural motion. It is a dilatory motion. It is not a routine motion. It falls into the same category as motions to adjourn the House and to adjourn the debate. These dilatory motions have characteristics. They can be moved at any time by any member who legitimately has the floor. As an example of how this works, members will have noticed that the other day the member for Simcoe West moved the adjournment of the House after being recognized in the period reserved for the introduction of bills. That was perfectly in order. The same is true for the motion to proceed to orders of the day. Furthermore, because our standing orders already put a restriction on a dilatory motion, the one to adjourn the debate and the other to adjourn the House, in saying that they cannot be moved until after the end of question period, the same rule should apply to the motion "to proceed to the orders of the day." This motion therefore is in order when moved after question period but before reaching orders of the day. The question is put immediately by the Speaker. The bells, if necessary, will ring for a maximum of 30 minutes, and a head count of members present will then take place. It should also be noted that the vote on this type of motion cannot be deferred.

In summary, therefore, the motion as moved by the honourable House leader is in order. It can be moved by any member of the House who legitimately has the floor. It is non-debatable and non-amendable, and the effect of it being carried results in the calling of the orders of the day at the end of the proceeding which was in process when it was moved. I wish to thank all honourable members who have contributed to this debate.

Mr D. S. Cooke: I am certainly glad to see you back, Mr Speaker. It has been an interesting couple of weeks in your absence.

On another point of order: There is one other ruling that was made last week which, combined with the ruling that you have just made today—the ruling that you have just read out I think goes partway to satisfying some of the concerns of the opposition party—means there are still ramifications that I think we have to consider.

The other ruling was made last Thursday by the Deputy Speaker, and it was a concern that I think both the House leaders on the opposition side have expressed. The government moved a motion to change the hours of the Legislature. The impact of that is basically to say that any section of our standing orders can be altered by the majority in this place.

We have on this side, and I think I speak on behalf of the House leader for the third party as well, written you a letter today, which you will be receiving. We are simply asking that you, Mr Speaker, along with your Deputy Speaker, review the ruling that was made last Thursday. Under the new rules, as you know, we cannot challenge a decision of a Speaker, and we respect that rule. We are not challenging the decision, but we feel that it would be appropriate, since no one in this place is infallible, for you, along with the Deputy Speaker and the other officers of the House, to review that decision so that we are not operating under any precedent that we think very much restricts the protection of the minority.

The standing orders were developed to protect the government as well as the opposition, and you are the supreme court in this place; you interpret the standing orders, which are our constitution and our charter of rights. We cannot challenge your decision, but we ask that you review it to make sure that our rights are being protected as a minority and that we are not giving the power to the government to do whatever it wants to do simply by a majority motion, as seems to be the case in the interpretation of the Deputy Speaker last week.

Mr Eves: Mr Speaker, on the same point if I might for a moment: I have co-authored the letter, which you will be receiving shortly, with the House leader for the official opposition.

The point I would like to press in the ruling that the Deputy Speaker made last Thursday is that the first part of the motion would appear to be quite proper, but the last couple of lines in the motion say that the motion shall take precedence over and do away with all other standing orders.

I think the wording at the end of that motion has some very dangerous consequences indeed if in fact the government can by a routine motion at any time do away with the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly under the guise of hooking it into a routine motion to extend the hours of sittings.

I do not even know what we are doing here and I do not know why we spent four years all agreeing on the new standing orders that we agreed to last October. I think this has serious ramifications for the minority in this Legislature. If that ruling is to stand, that the government under guise of a routine motion

to extend the sitting hours can simply do away with the standing orders, I do not even know what we are doing here.

Hon Mr Ward: Mr Speaker, I thank you for the timely ruling on the earlier issue. Relative to the motion that I introduced last Thursday, I would just point out that there is a fundamental difference involved in moving a motion of that sort under routine proceedings, a motion that is fully debatable—and believe me, we all know that it is a fully debatable motion at this point.

I just want to stress to you the difference in utilizing routine motions for a motion of that nature and the utilization, for instance, of standing order 9(c), which is a non-debatable motion that can be blocked, or of the rules that relate to the last eight sessional days where there is a limit put on debate.

I maintain that the standing orders as they apply to the last eight sessional days specifically lay out a limit and are there to serve a specific purpose, as is 9(c), and that the majority, the will of this House, can be utilized as it is from time to time on other occasions, not always by unanimous consent; that a motion that is again relating only to the operation of this House, which is basically incidental to the business of this House, is appropriately put under routine motions and can appropriately be dealt with by the House.

The Speaker: I have listened carefully to the member for Windsor-Riverside on his point of order and also to the member for Parry Sound and the government House leader. I have received the letter referred to and I will certainly respond to the letter in due course.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

FUNDING OF INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Miss Martel: Last week, the Premier responded to questions regarding the bid of the city of Toronto for the 1996 Olympics. He confirmed that debts from the games would be underwritten by the province. He stated that of course controls would be put in place to ensure accountability and proper spending.

The commitment made to the city of Toronto is far different than that which was given to the city of Sudbury. In July 1988, Sudbury hosted the World Junior Track and Field Championships. At that time, the province was good enough to provide over \$1 million, most of which went to reconstruction of the stadium.

When the championships ended, a debt of some \$1.1 million remained. The city approached the province for help and was told none would be given as Ontario had already been the largest contributor from any level of government.

The city of Sudbury went on to absorb the debt, providing less than what was actually owed to the creditors involved. The creditors accepted the arrangements, as getting some money back was better than nothing at all.

This haphazard way of funding international events is not fair or acceptable. If the government is going to give money to international events, then a strict policy on levels of funding and accountability is necessary. Otherwise, communities like Sudbury are going to be justifiably angry that they receive the short end of the stick.

1350

CANCER TREATMENT

Mr Eves: I would like to read into the record a letter from a constituent, Shirley Brander of Mattawa, to the Minister of Health:

"On October 5, 1989, I entered St Joseph's Hospital, North Bay, to have cancer surgery, a mastectomy of the left breast. Even though it was a radical mastectomy they didn't remove all my cancer and I needed to have radiation treatments. I was sent to Princess Margaret Cancer Clinic at Civic Hospital for further assessment and was told I would need to go out of town for treatment and that Princess Margaret [in Toronto] would be out of the question for me because of the backlog of people needing treatment. It was suggested that perhaps I could go to London, Ontario, or Ottawa. I had family in Kitchener and Toronto, so London would have been all right, and if Ottawa, I could at least come home once in a while.

"However, when I was contacted, they told me I was being sent to Thunder Bay, some 1,200 kilometres from home.

"There are some things you need to know about those who have cancer. It is a frightening disease, and to those who have it, it is difficult to cope with. You suddenly face your own mortality. You need a support system as never before and being sent so many miles from home is very, very difficult.

"My question then goes to the Minister of Health, Elinor Caplan, and the Premier of our province, Mr Peterson. What is being done so that those who must undergo radiation treatment can be treated closer to home?

"There were many people who were very sick and all alone without any family support in Thunder Bay at a time when they were facing the unknown. It isn't until you are in that position that you realize something must be done. I speak to our Ontario government on behalf of all cancer patients. Please, please do something about more treatment centres closer to home."

BARRIE REGIONAL AIRPORT

Mr Owen: Over 20 years ago when I was a member of Barrie city council, an effort was made to locate a regional airport in Oro township, just north of Barrie. Finally that dream is becoming a reality. This week I will be presenting, on behalf of our Minister of Transportation, a cheque in the amount of \$2.33 million towards this airport.

With a population now over 100,000 and growing rapidly, the Barrie area is by far the most populated in Ontario not served by a local public airport. Clearly, Barrie can make excellent use of such a facility to continue the healthy economic growth of the Lake Simcoe-Huron area.

I am pleased that Oro township and the city of Orillia will also be partners in the development and operation of the airport. Their initiatives in that regard demonstrate a commitment to continued economic prosperity.

The plan is to facilitate a 5,000-foot primary runway. The present short-field, privately owned airport site at the northern outskirts of Barrie is under increasing land use pressures and cannot be expanded. In the past few years, three small airports between Barrie and Toronto have been closed, and this new airport should help answer the void left by those closures.

Many people have been involved in bringing about this municipal airport, but I must single out the chairman of the advisory committee, Rob Warman, for his perseverance over many years. To Rob and the other members of his committee and the municipalities involved, I offer my congratulations for a job well done.

SEATON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Mr D. S. Cooke: The announcement of the creation of a 90,000-person community in North Pickering to be known as Seaton gives us all cause for alarm. The Minister of Housing's announcement refers to Seaton as "a community that will be a working model for the coming century." This community envisioned by the Liberal government, however, is more like the false dreams of the 1950s rather than the vision of the 21st century.

The community will be using land owned by the province to create a community which will have about 90 per cent home ownership. New Democrats are not against home ownership, but to use an irreplaceable government resource on the outskirts of Metropolitan Toronto and allow only a minimal amount of permanently affordable housing to be built is an absolute shame.

The minister commented in the Toronto Star on 30 March that 10 per cent, or maybe a little less, of the Seaton lands will be used for non-profit or co-operative housing. Since there are no plans for private rental housing to be built upon this land, this leaves 90 per cent or more of the housing to be home ownership. The 90-10 balance contrasts with the current realities. The 1981 census data show that in Metropolitan Toronto, 43.5 per cent of the households are tenants, and in the entire province, 36.7 per cent of the population are tenants.

We are concerned that this provincial resource is not going to be used to provide affordable housing for the people of this province. The description of what is affordable would mean that on the Seaton lands a family would have to have an income of \$55,800 to access affordable housing. That is a shame.

HEALTH CARDS

Mr Sterling: Today citizens of this province will begin receiving registration kits for the new individual health cards. We have long supported this new system and are pleased to see that it will soon be in place. I am, however, concerned that this new card will threaten some rights of individual privacy.

The minister has stated that the Ministry of Health has always accepted its responsibility to safeguard the confidentiality of personal health information. I do not feel that the word of the Minister of Health and the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act will guarantee confidentiality. While the privacy act states that medical information recorded by the provincial government or its agencies can be used only for the purpose for which it was intended, this act does not apply to the private sector. As a result, it is possible that these numbers may be used in the near future by banks, credit bureaus, insurance companies and stores.

There are currently no rules and regulations that say these new numbers can be used only for OHIP and nothing else. The federal social insurance number was introduced in 1964 for a very limited purpose but has been widely utilized.

I would like to advocate on behalf of my party that controls be placed on the use of this number. Legislation should be introduced that will protect the people of this province and ensure that individuals are not denied non-health-related services if they do not provide their health number.

FLAME OF HOPE

Mr Reycraft: I was shocked recently to hear that the Flame of Hope at Sir Frederick Banting Square in London was damaged by vandals and, as a result, snuffed out.

For members not familiar with the Flame of Hope, it was lit by the Queen Mother last summer at the head office of the Canadian Diabetes Association at Banting Square in London. The intent was that the flame would not be put out until a cure for diabetes was found. Many people in my riding share a particular attachment to the fight to find that cure. Dr Banting did much of his research leading to the discovery of insulin in the London area. I am proud of that historical connection.

The reason I bring this matter to the attention of the assembly is simple. I feel we all need to be reminded why the flame was lit: to offer hope to the thousands of Canadian diabetics. At this time, I think it is appropriate to reiterate the message of the flame, that insulin is not a cure for diabetes. A cure must be found.

I am pleased to inform the assembly that the Queen Mother will again be lending her support to this cause. Jane Cunningham, the executive director of the association, has a message written by the Queen Mother to be read at the relighting ceremony. That event will take place in the next four to five weeks.

I am sure other members of the assembly join me in wishing the association well. I know we all look forward to the day when the flame will be extinguished for the right reason.

HOSPITAL BEDS

Mr Kormos: Elsa D'Innocenzo from Westwood Crescent in Welland is grateful that the surgery on her son, Donnie, at the Toronto Hospital for Sick Children was successful earlier this year. While she was there, though, she had an opportunity to share experiences and empathize with other parents of other sick kids. She talked to the parents of young Andrew. These people told her that the second surgery was postponed five minutes after it had been scheduled. When the parents asked why, a very frustrated doctor said there was a child in intensive care who had not died and therefore there was no bed for Andrew.

She asked, in the city where a \$500-million-plus stadium sits only a few blocks from that very same hospital, how can it be that a child in intensive care has to die before there is a bed available for another kid? She asked, why is it that in an affluent country like Canada, a woman travels to Toronto for surgery only to be told that it will have to be rescheduled because of lack of beds? She asked, why is it that in an affluent country like Canada, a 78-year-old man has to spend a day and night and day and night on a stretcher, on a gurney in an emergency department, because no bed is available?

She asked, why is it that in affluent country like Canada she and her son had to wait seven hours for him to be admitted—sitting, waiting to be admitted—because there was no bed available? She asked, does not anyone care about what is happening? She says, do not tell us that committees are looking into it. She tells us Andrew died. Her son, Donnie, lived, and she is grateful for that. Andrew died. How many needless deaths like his will occur while the committee studies the situation? Those questions had better be answered.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE SERVICE

Mr McCague: Members of this House are well aware it is the policy of this government that municipalities throughout the province shall be responsible for the greatest financial burden the province can get away with.

Members of this House are aware of the high cost of providing emergency services to residents of the province, where the municipality also pays. The cost to a municipality of

providing a 911 service can reach millions of dollars. It provides instantaneous contact with police, fire and ambulance services. The moments saved by a 911 line can often be the difference between life and death.

Northumberland county has recently passed a resolution petitioning the Premier and the Solicitor General for financial assistance for 911 services. The resolution reads in part, "That whereas 911 emergency service is becoming universal in other parts of Canada and the USA, and this province has relied on municipalities to finance it, be it resolved that this council petition the Premier to set up a 911 emergency phone service throughout the province."

This resolution is supported by a number of municipalities, including Simcoe county in my riding. I urge the government to address this very important issue.

1400

DRUG ABUSE

Mr Adams: In Peterborough this past year, the Four Counties Drug Awareness Committee, FourCast Inc and the Addiction Research Foundation used Drug Awareness Week to bring together the growing coalition of organizations concerned about drug abuse in our society.

These included those working to help victims of drug abuse such as the Salvation Army, Alcoholics Anonymous, Curve Lake Community Centre, Cavan United Church, Ozanam House and the John Howard Society, and those working to prevent drug abuse such as the two school boards, Peterborough Against Impaired Driving, or PAID, Students Against Drunk Driving, or SADD, Trinity College, the Peterborough Sales and Ad Club, the lung association, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, local media, the Lions, the Kiwanians, the Peterborough Chiropractic Group, the public library, the chamber of commerce, Trent University, Sir Sandford Fleming College and 1 Nautilus.

Of course, many of these groups, like the police and the Brock Street Mission, try to both prevent drug abuse and help those afflicted. Peterborough is weaving a support net for those with drug problems and a safety net to protect itself from problems of drug abuse. I congratulate all those who are already part of those nets and encourage others to join. Peterborough is a community united against drugs.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

COMMUNITY JUSTICE WEEK

Hon Mr Scott: I would like to inform the members of the Legislature that 16 April marks the beginning of Community Justice Week in Ontario, an annual event reaching out into local communities across the province. Sponsored by the Ontario ministries of the Attorney General, Correctional Services and the Solicitor General, and working with dozens of communities across Ontario, Community Justice Week helps to foster community understanding and involvement in the system.

We hope it will give people a more realistic appreciation of how the system actually works. The theme this year, "Justice: We all make it happen," is intended to bring to the people of Ontario a sense of ownership and participation in the justice process.

Community Justice Week is being celebrated in various ways from Hawkesbury to Fort Frances. Crown attorneys, the police, correctional staff and others whose work contributes to the process will be meeting with groups across the province to

provide information and encourage community co-operation and involvement in the administration of justice.

In addition, Community Justice Week provides legal professionals and the general public with an informal setting in which to exchange ideas about the process. For example, the Canadian Bar Association-Ontario has organized a number of activities that are being held today. This year the Ministry of the Attorney General is providing support for a number of those activities, such as the mock trial competitions in Ontario high schools and the association's province-wide essay contest, which is open to high school students in grades 10 through 13.

Highlighting this year's activities are a number of interactive theatre presentations taking place in Toronto, Windsor, Ottawa, Sudbury and Thunder Bay. Through joint sponsorship from the ministries of the Attorney General, Correctional Services and the Solicitor General, Trinity Theatre Toronto will be providing two-day bilingual workshops and presentations to students and members of the public in each of the five centres.

Mr Reville: Wait till you get to the colouring book.

Hon Mr Scott: My friend laughs at the colouring book, but it is serious.

By focusing on current justice-related issues such as drug abuse, drinking and driving, and family violence, we hope to strengthen contact and dialogue between the ministries and students who are not touched directly by justice issues.

Community Justice Week also provides communities with the opportunity to become more familiar with public legal information materials available from the various ministries.

To assist children with the criminal court process, particularly those children who are required to be in court either as victims or witnesses, my ministry has introduced a new publication suitable for children called *What's My Job in Court?*

[Laughter]

Hon Mr Scott: The publication is intended to familiarize children in an educational and appealing way with the concepts, people, vocabulary and events that are part of the court process. The honourable members may think it is silly, but that may be because they have never experienced the difficulties of dealing with young children in a setting that is often difficult for them to absorb.

In keeping with the spirit of Community Justice Week, I encourage the members to participate in events held in their own communities. We need everyone's co-operation, even the co-operation of the honourable members opposite who laugh, to improve the justice system of Ontario.

CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

Hon Mrs Wilson: Five years ago today, section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms came into effect. The principle upheld by section 15 was clear: equality for everyone before and under the law.

Many groups were eager and ready to begin exploring the section's effects on equality. Certainly women's groups were among the most determined and prepared, having long researched and formed their plans for building a country where equality would be a living ideal.

In 1985 the province of Ontario made \$1 million available to the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund to support its charter equality work. LEAF has made an extraordinary contribution to the development of women's equality rights in Canada through its litigation efforts.

As Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues in Ontario, I want to acknowledge the commitment, determination and expertise of LEAF and other equality-seeking groups and to encourage them in their efforts.

Please join me in marking this fifth anniversary of section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This is a significant anniversary in the history of women's equality.

RESPONSES

COMMUNITY JUSTICE WEEK

Mr Kormos: The irony of the Attorney General's suggesting that Community Justice Week in Ontario is going to give people a realistic appreciation of how the system actually works is sad, because the fact is that the system is not working.

The Attorney General cannot tell it to correctional officers who work in overcrowded facilities and unsafe work conditions and who have not been accorded any relief by this government. Indeed there are demands for safe, healthier working conditions—safer for themselves as correctional officers and safer for those inmates who are there, including a whole bunch of psychiatric patients whom this government cannot accommodate in hospitals because the hospital facilities are not available, psychiatric patients detoured into correctional facilities where there is no treatment taking place and where sad situations are being aggravated.

The minister has a lot of nerve to talk about Community Justice Week when police forces across Ontario are underfunded, when municipal taxpayers—the cupboard is bare; there is simply no more money in municipal coffers to finance police forces that want to do their job but are being restrained and prevented by this government from adequately enforcing the law, from adequately apprehending criminals and from adequately prosecuting them. Why? Because this government refuses to properly fund policing here in Ontario.

This government brags about its war on drugs, yet at the same time this government liberalizes and relaxes guidelines for alcohol advertising. Alcohol is still the number one abusive substance of choice, the number one killer, the number one destroyer of families and the number one destroyer of young lives. This government talks about a war on drugs, yet it will not fund police forces that want to target drug trafficking in their respective communities. There may well be a war on drugs in Ontario. The question is, what side is this government on?

1410

This government has a lot of nerve to talk about Community Justice Week when there are hundreds and probably thousands of victims of training schools in this province right now in 1990 who are bearing the scars—nay, the open wounds—of the almost unspeakable violence imposed upon them by their caretakers throughout the 1950s, the 1960s and probably into the 1970s. This government refuses to accept its responsibility to those people, now adults, who were victims and victimized as young children, to the children of today and to others who are in custodial situations, be they young, be they old, be they seniors in unlicensed nursing homes or be they youngsters in similar training schools where there has been contracting out. This government refuses to accept its responsibility to conduct a public inquiry, as it is capable of, as it ought to, as it is obligated to, to address the issue of that violence against those young people.

They have a lot of nerve talking about Community Justice Week in this province. There is no justice in this Legislature.

How can people outside this House in the province of Ontario expect any from this government either?

Mr Reville: Further to the Attorney General's announcement of the gala Community Justice Week in Ontario, I show him yet again a document called *You've Got A Friend*, written by the late Father Sean O'Sullivan, which says that there are a million Ontario citizens who are in need of advocacy service, whether they are in institutions or in the community. He further says the lack of co-ordinated advocacy services accessible to all vulnerable adults requiring assistance is a profound injustice.

What has this Attorney General done with this report? Bubbles, nada, niente, nothing, not a thing. He should get on with it.

CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

Mr R. F. Johnston: The second meaningful statement by a minister today was to set the fifth anniversary of section 15 of the charter. I suppose we will do it for the sixth, the seventh and the eighth; any excuse to make a statement that makes it sound like this government is proactive around women's issues instead of doing something.

Why do we not see some more action on battered women, child care, employment equity targets? Why not talk about the hundreds of thousands of women who are going to be left out of the pay equity programs? Why does the government not talk a little bit about why it has not brought in the employment standards changes yet for parental leave? Why not talk about all the things this government has not done to reinforce women's equality in the workplace, rather than another vacuous announcement of one page to be able to say to the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund that it is doing a good job? Yes, they are, in spite of this government.

COMMUNITY JUSTICE WEEK

Mr Sterling: I want to say to the Attorney General that we are very supportive of Community Justice Week. I believe bringing together the various disciplines involved in the justice system is extremely important, both in a formal and an informal sense.

I also want to say that when I introduced this concept in 1982, my remarks took up about half the time the Attorney General did in announcing it this week. As you remember, Mr Speaker, 1982 was not an election year, and therefore we could expect perhaps a longer embellishment of what Community Justice Week is all about.

I do want to say, though, that probably the most important part of Community Justice Week is that each community and each region that gets together to talk about its concerns gives professionals and various disciplines an opportunity to exchange information and probably does a great deal in ironing out the very difficult problems they face from year to year.

It also gives an opportunity for communities to congratulate the people, the men and women who devote their lives to a very difficult part of our system, and that is the justice system. So, on behalf of our party, I would like to thank the people at this time for their contribution, those people who are professionally involved and those people who volunteer many hours, as is the case in the correctional services area, to the justice system. We certainly appreciate their efforts.

Mr Brandt: I would like to compliment the member for Carleton on having introduced the concept of Community Justice Week some years ago, a concept which, in the words of the

Attorney General, indicates very clearly that from little acorns big trees sometimes grow. The length of the address by the Attorney General shows how quickly some of these things can grow in terms of the length of the statement.

I would like to do something unusual with respect to my response, in that I am going to take the high road—

Interjection: Don't do it, Andy. You'll be sorry.

Mr Brandt: This is the middle of April; I thought I should do that.

On a serious note, I want to say to the Attorney General that certainly the concept is an important one because no society anywhere can operate without the support and the confidence that we all must have in the justice system. It is a fundamental right which does in fact, as we all know, protect the rights of each and every citizen of this province and of this country. It is important that our communities understand the workings of the justice system, that they understand some of those mysteries the Attorney General develops with respect to his response to how the justice system, matters like inquiries and all of those things should be operated, how they come to pass in our communities and how they are made to work in the best interests of the people of this province.

Let me say to the Attorney General that we will certainly give our support to the concept and encourage our communities to look at the inner workings of the system to make sure that we can improve upon it in the days and the weeks ahead.

ORAL QUESTIONS

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr B. Rae: I have a question of the Premier. Last week the government introduced a motion which would have the effect of allowing the majority of the House, the Liberal Party on its own, without the agreement of the other two parties, to suspend the standing orders of this House, which is the way in which we have governed ourselves, the way in which a little bit of democracy is preserved in Ontario.

I want to ask the Premier why he would think his party, as a majority party, has the right to suspend the standing orders of this House and to simply do his will. Does he not appreciate the terrible precedent this kind of motion sets for this House when it comes to governing the relationship between a majority and a minority? Does he not understand how dangerous that kind of precedent is?

Hon Mr Peterson: I think the House leader can explain the democratic aspects of this.

Hon Mr Ward: One, I would point out to the honourable Leader of the Opposition that the motion that was introduced was a motion that was incidental to the operation of the House and as such is a routine motion as prescribed by the standing orders. I would refer him to those standing orders and he can satisfy himself of that fact.

Two, it is not uncommon for motions to be put regarding the business of this House and the rearrangement of the time. They have been put in the past, not always by unanimous consent. I would say to you, Mr Speaker, that the intent of the motion was just to provide additional time for a member of his party, the member for Welland-Thorold, to make his point. If the Leader of the Opposition prefers, I can assure him here and now that we will concede unanimous consent to extend the time so that the member for Welland-Thorold can be heard just a little longer.

Mr B. Rae: I am sorry the Premier chose not to answer, because the Premier, along with a number of his colleagues, spent some time in opposition, a position which the government House leader has not been in.

I want to say to the government House leader that in my experience a governing party which thinks it can suspend the rules of this place with a majority against the will of the two opposition parties is a government that is so enmeshed in its own arrogance that it knows nothing of the basic rules of democracy. That is the kind of government we have today.

What kind of marching orders is the government House leader getting from the insurance companies or from anywhere else that make him think he can simply ride roughshod over the rules of this House, over the standing orders and over the basic principle that minorities have some rights around here as well?

1420

Hon Mr Ward: As I indicated when I introduced government notice of motion 30, this House has had ample opportunity to debate a very important piece of legislation that is in front of it. Some 26 members have spoken to this issue, consuming some 107 hours of House time. Over the course of the past three weeks no other member of this Legislature has been able to participate in the debate, and I would say, sir, that if there are any lessons in arrogance to be taught around here, they can be taught—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order, order.

Mr B. Rae: The fact remains that this government has decided to bring in a motion which suspends the rules. It says specifically that, "this motion applies notwithstanding any standing order." This House spent four years in minority and in majority parliaments working out a way of living and a way of operating this place. Those are the standing orders that are supposed to apply.

My simple question to the minister is, where does he think he has the authority under the standing orders to put forward a resolution which calls for the suspension or the end of those standing orders? Does the minister not realize the terrible precedent he is setting, which means the majority can decide at any time that one clause or another clause or one part of the rules of this place can simply be suspended because it is not convenient to the government of the day? Does he not know how terrible a precedent that is?

Hon Mr Ward: I want to assure the Leader of the Opposition that I did consult with my colleagues who spent some time in opposition over the use of filibuster. They all assured me they only used it responsibly and I take those assurances strictly to heart.

Having said that, I want to speak specifically to the routine motion that was introduced. Frankly, it suspends standing order 9(a), which sets out the regular hours, and it suspends standing order 33. That is not uncommon. Today, under routine proceedings, we will suspend standing orders 8(a) and 94(b) to accommodate private members' business. It happens from day to day over issues that are incidental to the operation of this House. Frankly, we have an obligation as elected members of this assembly, here to do a job, here to see that the issues of the day are dealt with in an expeditious, reasonable fashion and we intend to do that.

The Speaker: Perhaps this would be a good time to remind all members of standing order 20(b).

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

TEMAGAMI DISTRICT RESOURCES

Mr B. Rae: My second question is to the Premier as well. The Premier is now on record as saying, with respect to Temagami, that the idea of any environmental assessment would be, and I am quoting him, "redundant, overlapping, a conflict of jurisdiction and a waste of time."

I wonder why the Premier would be making that kind of statement when he must know there are many independent foresters—I would refer him, for example, to Professor Benson and his critique of the Temagami and Latchford interim plans—who talk about the fact that the allowable cut calculation is too high. Dr. Benson talks about problems with regeneration, problems with the sustainable levels, problems with clear-cuts, problems with the old growth, problems with the skyline reserve. He drives a truck through the plan which the Premier has put forward, saying how inadequate it is for the protection of the environment.

Why would the Premier have gone on record as saying there will be no environmental assessment and that in fact it is simply a waste of time? Why would he make such a bizarre comment when there has been so much justified criticism of his plan?

Hon Mr Peterson: I think the minister can help out my friend about what is going on in Temagami.

Hon Mrs McLeod: The honourable member raises, in particular, a number of concerns that Dr Benson has addressed in one of his reports on the Temagami area. I would certainly recognize that those are broad concerns about the way in which forest management and timber management are carried out in Ontario and that those concerns are exactly the kinds of concerns which are being examined in a very thorough way in a class environmental assessment currently ongoing.

It is, as I think all members of this House know, the first environmental assessment of its kind to be undertaken in the country. We believe it is appropriate, since as a ministry we have voluntarily entered into this class environmental assessment, that we do answer those kinds of questions and respond in our timber management plans to those kinds of concerns. That is an issue which we have also looked at in the interim in looking at the Temagami management plans, which I would remind the House are interim plans being brought forward to cabinet and which do in fact address in some detail the concerns that Dr Benson has raised in a more general way.

Mr B. Rae: What is the minister going to do, have interim logging and if the environmental assessment that takes place in Thunder Bay says she cannot do it she is going to put the trees back up? The minister does not make any sense.

The minister's own ministry has produced a leaflet called Timber Management Planning—Getting Involved Can Make a Difference. On page 7 there is a statement on environmental assessment. I want to read what the minister's own public relations department says: "If significant issues still exist, Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act provides for further review. The plan or parts of it may be referred to the Ministry of the Environment for an individual environmental assessment."

There is no other area in the province where environmental concerns have been more clearly raised than in Temagami. I want to ask the minister this question: If these words in her

public relations campaign mean anything at all, why would they not apply to Temagami?

Hon Mrs McLeod: I trust the honourable member is not suggesting that concerns about responsible forest management can be considered only in the context of Temagami. I would certainly not feel as though I was taking my responsibility seriously if I were not concerned about these same issues of responsible management across the province. I certainly recognize that there have to be interim timber management plans across the province while the class environmental assessment is carried out.

There are tremendous numbers of jobs and people employed as a result of our forest products industries. We cannot bring all of those to a halt while we carry out what is a very important environmental assessment on forest management in Ontario. But certainly we have a responsibility in the interim period to be addressing the same kinds of concerns that are being raised in that class environmental assessment and to ensure that we are carrying out the most careful kind of timber management in that interim period. In the Temagami area specifically, which has been a focus of public concern, we have taken extraordinary steps, both in our management and in review by the Temagami Advisory Council.

1430

Mr B. Rae: The minister's statements are simply self-serving, as one would expect from the minister. She is expressing the view of the ministry in terms of the position that it has taken for a very long time.

The purpose of an environmental assessment is to get an independent assessment. When you look, for example, at what Dr Benson has said, it is not a general review of the ministry's practices. It is a very specific review of what is going on in that particular forest saying that there are particular interests that have to be protected, and they are not protected in this plan.

I want to ask the minister again, if the environmental assessment laws mean anything at all, how can she allow the Premier to make the kind of statement where he says that hearings on Temagami would be—and I am quoting his words—“redundant, overlapping, a conflict of jurisdiction and a waste of time”? If the environmental assessment laws do not apply to a case like Temagami, exactly where do they apply on an individual plan to cut?

Hon Mrs McLeod: Before responding specifically to the questions, I really must take some exception to the suggestion that the responses of a minister are self-serving. I am in politics to serve the interests of the people of Ontario. I can assure the member that my sole interest in this particular issue, as in any others, is to find the kind of balance that best serves those interests of the people of Ontario, considering all of the different people who have a concern with the Temagami forest, as with other forest management issues across the province.

Specifically in the Temagami area, I would stress again that what are being brought forward to cabinet for its consideration are interim two-year plans, very carefully addressing the kinds of concerns which have been raised by many different people concerned about the Temagami forest area. These have been reviewed—and this is an exceptional process—by the Temagami Advisory Council not once, but twice.

The Temagami Advisory Council in carrying out a second review following a full public consultation process at my request, seeking to be a truly independent body, chose to employ two independent foresters to assist it in carrying out the review

of those plans. I think that a careful analysis of the plans would indicate that there has been careful management.

TRANSFER PAYMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES

Mr Brandt: My question is for the Premier. The Premier will be aware that the Association of Municipalities of Ontario very clearly put forth its position that it is extremely unhappy with the government, which has in fact realized revenue increases of some 11 per cent over the course of the past few years, while transferring only some four per cent to municipalities. At the selfsame time, the Premier has been passing on new and additional programs and costs to municipalities as a result of the policies of his government.

I know that the Premier wants to shift this question to a minister, but I really think that as a policy of the government, dealing with one of the major partners of the provincial government, it is important that we hear from the Premier on this question. Does the Premier think it is fair that he is transferring only four per cent increases while he is realizing 11 per cent increases himself and at the same time passing more and more programs on to the municipalities? Does the Premier think that is fair?

Hon Mr Peterson: I think the Treasurer could tell the honourable member why he is wrong, and he would be very happy to do so.

Hon R. F. Nixon: I would be glad to do so because the honourable member is indicating the transfers to the municipalities are inadequate, and probably all of our friends at the municipal level would agree because it is only 8.2 per cent this year, just under \$5 billion.

While the absolute amount is stunningly large, we know that the responsibilities at the municipal level are also very onerous. We believe that the 8.2 per cent that I have referred to this year—which is the overall transfer, at least until the budget announcements that may in fact have some effect on those in the future—is the appropriate level of transference. The municipalities, as the honourable member knows, have an independent source of revenue in the property tax. They feel that this is unduly exposed to taxation, but that is their judgement only.

The honourable member has criticized me, as Treasurer, for raising taxes here. He has indicated that he feels more money should go into our new programs. I do not know how I can satisfy him on both of those particulars. We feel that we are dealing fairly and equitably with the municipalities, in spite of their complaint.

Mr Brandt: It is not only the transfers that are upsetting the municipalities. It involves a long list of programs which the Treasurer has passed on to the municipalities, like the employer health levy, pay equity, courtroom security—which the Attorney General has indicated does not cost anyone at the municipal level any additional money, and he stands alone in that particular position because right across the province everyone, I might add, disagrees with the Attorney General on that point—social assistance reforms and the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program. All these provincial programs, as a result of these transfers, have resulted in tremendous tax increases at the local level.

Does the Treasurer think it is fair that taxes should go up in Kingston 10 per cent, in Sudbury some 11.5 per cent, in York region 9.3 per cent and in Essex county 25 per cent because of the inadequate transfers that he is passing on, plus the additional programs he is adding to municipalities?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The member can go through a litany of municipalities that have 25 per cent increases. I did not know that county was raising its taxes by that particular amount. If he wants to go to Brant county, he will find that Brantford township is raising its taxes zero per cent. Whether or not they are better managers than the people the member is talking about is up to the judgement of the local electorate.

We believe that 8.2 per cent is a rational increase and that the payment of the employer health tax is considered to be neutral in that the employers were paying OHIP for their employees previously. If they were not, it is our judgement that employers should pay that share, which amounts to only 16 per cent of the cost of medicare. We feel in many respects that this is a bargain for all employers and that municipalities have the responsibility to pay this on behalf of their employees.

The honourable member may not agree with all of these particulars, but we do believe that we are serving not only the general population of the province well but also the municipal leaders, who have once again come forward with their cries of inadequacy.

Mr Brandt: The reason they are crying that the transfer grants are inadequate is that in the Premier's own home riding in the great city of London, which I consider to be a well-managed community—we both know the mayor well—fully half of the entire tax increase at the municipal level is directly attributable to this province and to his policies. Does the Treasurer think it is adequate that the Liberals can just dream up programs on their side of the House and pass them on to the municipalities without having any of the resources passed on with those additional responsibilities?

I will tell the Treasurer this: If the federal government did to him what he is doing to the municipalities, he would be screaming, because the amount of money that he has taken—

The Speaker: Order. I believe you came to the question mark a little earlier, did you not?

Mr Brandt: I did not ask the question, though.

The Speaker: Well, please ask it then.

Mr Brandt: Does the Treasurer think it is fair and equitable that half of the tax increase in a community like London should be directly attributable to programs that he passes on to municipalities?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I think the honourable member, being sensitive about what the Progressive Conservative government in Ottawa is doing, wanted to head off my usual answer to his second supplementary, and that is to point out the inadequacies of funding from the federal level to the provinces.

I think, however, that the taxpayers are getting sick of this handoff situation. They realize that people at all levels pay the taxes at the municipal, provincial and federal levels. The member would be aware, coming from Sarnia, about growth pressures, the changes in municipal government, the need for improving services at all levels. Surely he would not think that the municipalities should be exempt from paying the employer health tax. Surely he would not believe that pay equity is something that should not apply at the municipal level. He also understands, having been mayor of Sarnia, that local officials have the responsibility to tax their local people in a fair and equitable way just the way we have, just the way the government of Canada does.

We make our judgements in this regard. The honourable member is critical of them. He is paid to do that; some people in his party think he does a very good job of it. As far as we are

concerned, we believe that the transfers to the municipalities are fair, and we understand that there is stress on them, just as there is stress on every cabinet minister here in fulfilling the responsibilities given to him under our statutes. The same is true at the federal level. We are doing the best we can, and we think it is a very good job indeed.

1440

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr Sterling: I would like to ask the government House leader a question regarding these motions that were put forward by him last week. One motion was to extend the sitting hours and to take that motion as precedence over all of the standing orders at his beck and call. The second motion dealt with an order to jump over certain parts of our routine procedures each day.

When these rules were being negotiated over the past three years, there was a balance that the three members of that committee were trying to reach; that is, the balance between the right of the government to govern and right of the opposition to delay, because delay in our British parliamentary system is the only tack that the opposition has to bring the government to heel.

We gave up the right to ring the bells. We gave up rights to challenge the Speaker. We gave up the estimates process. Does the government House leader believe, by bringing these motions forward, that he has reneged on the understanding that was reached between the three parties at that time?

Hon Mr Ward: As I indicated in an earlier response, it is not uncommon under government motions or under motions through routine proceedings to set aside standing orders in matters that are incidental to the business of the House. Today, under routine motions, we will be setting aside standing orders 8(a) and 94(b) so that members can exchange places for private members' business.

Mr Sterling: On agreement, as it has always been done.

Hon Mr Ward: It happens routinely; it does not happen by unanimous consent. As a matter of fact, I can recall that the recommittal of Bill 147 was not by unanimous consent. It was subject to some debate, and indeed it was passed.

A motion such as this, which I believe is not a dilatory motion but indeed a motion that is fully debatable—and indeed it was debated last Thursday—is appropriate. If the members of this Legislature want to rearrange the business of this House, they can do so. I also want to stress, though, that the intent of the motion was to give more opportunity for members in this House to participate in the debate on government notice of motion 30. Obviously the member for Welland-Thorold is not finished, and we were providing him with that opportunity.

Mr Eves: With respect to the motion that the government House leader moved to extend the sitting hours, which he referred to as a routine motion, and it is going to take precedence over all the other standing orders of the Legislative Assembly, does he still regard this motion this week as being routine, and is it his intention to call it this afternoon? Seeing that it was so important, is he going to call it today?

Hon Mr Ward: The motion that I put forward on Thursday basically was to suspend standing orders 9 and 33. Indeed, if the honourable member refers to standing order 33(f), there is some anticipation that from time to time the House will sit beyond six o'clock. That is still indicated as part of the

standing orders. It does not relate to the last eight sessional days, because they are covered by standing order 6. So I would say to my friend that on the standing orders for today, we have government notice of motion 30, and when we get to the orders of the day, that will be the order that is called.

Mr Eves: On the government House leader's other motion, his motion to move from motions directly into orders of the day, doing away with introduction of bills, does he not realize the dangerous precedent this motion sets now that the Speaker has ruled on it? The precedent it sets is that during a minority government situation, combined opposition parties could prevent the government from ever introducing a single piece of legislation in this House. Does he think that is appropriate? Does he not realize what he is doing?

Hon Mr Ward: As I see it, if one looks at the examples that took place in this House on a couple of occasions, where routine proceedings, specifically the introduction of bills, could be utilized for the balance of the sessional day until 6 pm, that would render totally ineffective any previous motion that reflects the will of this House.

Mr Eves: It has not been used "until 6 o'clock." The government adjourned the House at 5 the only day it was used.

Hon Mr Ward: I would remind my friend that we did not adjourn the House; the member for Simcoe West adjourned the house. It was on their motion.

I would say to my friend that it indeed is a very dangerous precedent. What it means basically is that no business could possibly pass through this House through the utilization of the introduction of bills. Frankly, I think that is neither responsible nor appropriate. Frankly, I think the motion that was brought in last week to deal with that is an appropriate way to ensure that the orders of the day can be called when the situation arises that they should be called.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr Laughren: I have a question for the Treasurer concerning the imposition of the goods and services tax at the federal level. The Treasurer will know, I hope, that this is going to transfer about \$4.7 billion from the corporate sector to individual taxpayers all across Canada. Professor Neil Brooks, in writing for the Institute for Research on Public Policy, has recommended that there be a \$2-billion shift to the corporate sector in new taxes to compensate for that windfall.

Since about 40 per cent of that, or \$800 million, could come from Ontario could the Treasurer assure us that he is looking at that possibility and that something will be done in his budget a week from today to redress the inequity of that shift from the corporate sector to individual Canadians?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The question is an extremely interesting one and an important one. I think the basic fact is correct, although I am thinking of it in terms of Ontario, which is the way he was referring to it.

For example, our retail sales tax applies to corporations and their purchases, except for machinery and production equipment, as it does to any individual. If we were to accept the value added process in our sales tax, it would mean that we would forgo about \$3 billion of the almost \$9-billion revenue, and that, of course, would have to be picked up by individuals. That is the kind of transference that is referred to as the elimination of the silent killer of jobs, if I am not mixing up too many of the stories here.

So I find that interesting. I consider the imposition of that tax a federal responsibility and the redress of inequity in that regard a federal responsibility, but I am aware of the situation and am thinking about it.

In answer specifically to his question, I am not saying.

Mr Laughren: Perhaps we can help stiffen the Treasurer's backbone a bit in anticipation of the budget next week. I realize that the budget next week is just one spasm in a whole array of programs that the Treasurer will be introducing, but I do want to ask him specifically, since there are opportunities here, without being draconian to the private sector, of returning some equity to the whole tax structure in the province—there is the minimum corporate tax, which I raised with the Treasurer last week and which would not unduly penalize the private sector. There are loopholes that can be closed. Why will the Treasurer not make a commitment that he will either bring in a minimum corporate tax, close off some loopholes or raise the corporate sector taxes to make up for that windfall they are getting from the imposition of the GST?

1450

Hon R. F. Nixon: I think the honourable member has to be aware that our corporations, manufacturing and otherwise, are working in a very competitive world market. Not all of them do business here.

Interjection.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Well, he has to bear that in mind, because the honourable member is in a position to know as well as I, and perhaps even better, that unless corporations are in a position to maintain themselves and expand and unless Ontario is in a position to be attractive as far as world capital is concerned for expansion, we are going to have the kinds of problems that none of us want, and that is the problem of not having sufficient high-quality jobs for ourselves and the young people who will be following us.

The honourable member has to think of the balance required in order to see that the economy of the province not only maintains its health and strength and progressivity but also builds on that. Mr Speaker, you are aware that the rate of real growth has been positive over the last eight years. For most of the years of my Treasurership, it has been in the four or five per cent range. But somehow or other it is moving down to the point where it is below two per cent now, and we have to be thinking not necessarily of transferring the tax load on to industries and rich people, because the member usually refers to them in these questions, but we have to see that our taxes are applied in such a way that the growth of the economy in the province is going to be strengthened and increased.

TOURISM

Mr McLean: For over a week I have been waiting to ask the Minister of Tourism and Recreation a question. The minister was not here all last week; he is not here today. I wonder if the Premier would know if he still has a minister or if he is away holidaying.

The Speaker: Is that your question?

Mr McLean: However, I will direct my question to the Premier. Tourist operators are Ontario's largest employer. Last year, tourism in Ontario dropped by over three million, costing thousands of jobs. Gas taxes, hotel taxes, liquor taxes and the health levy have endangered over 300,000 jobs. How does the Premier propose to address these problems and how does he

respond to the industry's claim that he has failed to adequately market Ontario as a tourist centre? Five years ago, on 3 April, he promised to take off the five per cent tax. Why has he not and what is he going to do?

Hon Mr Peterson: The Treasurer has been dealing with this matter.

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member takes note of the fact that the Minister of Tourism and Recreation is not available and has not been for a few days. He and the other taxpayers would want to know, I am sure, that the minister is currently in Japan, promoting Expo 2000. After all, it is tough, but somebody has got to do it. This is just part of the responsibility. As a matter of fact, I see the Leader of the Opposition waving his hand and snapping his finger. Actually, I can recall an occasion when the Premier and I were building up trade and goodwill with the Pacific Rim. We added a lot of firepower to our attractiveness by asking the Leader of the Opposition to go along, and he was able, under those circumstances, to attend as well. So there has been a lot of sacrifice in this regard that we should know about.

I have read the comments about the tourism brief very carefully. I do not think it is unfair to say that I had written them and asked them to submit a brief and had not received one until I read about it in the newspapers today. It is a very important industry indeed, and the honourable member would know that the government has substantially funded increases and strengthening of our tourism programs. This year alone the increase in the allocations is 8.5 per cent—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon R. F. Nixon: —and I will be right back to the member.

Mr Villeneuve: What is happening in the Pacific Rim is most important, but what is happening in eastern Ontario is even more important. The St Lawrence Parks Commission has shut down five of 15 parks, fully one third, turning away tourists from an area that needs economic growth and economic stimulus. The Treasurer can probably bring a committee of cabinet, a deputy minister for eastern Ontario, even a ministry for eastern Ontario, but this cannot do away with the harm that is already done. We are going to let prime waterfront grow brush and weeds this coming year. The private sector is now trying to negotiate with the government and with this ministry. Will the Treasurer see to it that these parks do not close down in 1990? It is most important to us.

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am very concerned by the honourable member because I know what he says is true. Frankly, some of the information is new to me. That does concern me, because the St Lawrence park system is one of the very best anywhere in North America and has always attracted many people to one of the finest displays anywhere. I believe that the basic aspect of that park system will be very much in operation and people will be glad to be there.

The honourable member, as a taxpayer, along with the nine million other people who are watching even at this moment, should know that \$192 million from the provincial Treasury is being applied to advertising and direct assistance to the tourist operators. We would like to do more, but there is a growth this year, as I have already pointed out, of 8.5 per cent. Whether it is inadequate or not, it is the best we can do under these circumstances.

NIAGARA ESCARPMENT

Mr Elliot: I have a question of the Premier. As we are aware, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has designated the Niagara Escarpment as a world biosphere reserve. Given that activities which degrade the natural environment of the area would be incompatible with this designation, would this government be prepared to support an amendment to the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act which would remove landfilling as an acceptable activity in the escarpment area?

Hon Mr Peterson: Let me say that is the first thoughtful question I have received today. I am very, very happy to respond to the honourable member for Halton North.

I attended with him the ceremony a week or so ago when UNESCO awarded the escarpment with a special designation as a biosphere reserve. I think it was a great compliment, I do not pretend for this government but for all members of this Legislature and indeed going back to John Robarts and others who really dreamt of the escarpment as one of the longest continuous parks in North America and dedicating that preserve in perpetuity to our children.

I know the honourable member for Halton North has very strong views on this subject, and he has made a representation to the cabinet, to myself and to the Niagara Escarpment Commission. It is our hope that we will have the results of the deliberations of the Niagara Escarpment Commission in the not-too-distant future. As my honourable friend knows, they are dealing with that particular issue at this very time and I urge him to keep on with his representations. We will want to see their advice, and then that plan, which is now under a five-year review, will come back to this House for final determination. But I can tell my honourable friend I think the appropriate place for that discussion is with the commission, where it is going on at the present time.

Mr Elliot: Given the large number of quarrying operations and proposed dump sites situated along the escarpment, is the Premier prepared to entertain the idea of transferring responsibility for the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act and the escarpment commission to the Ministry of the Environment so that the government ministry which is responsible for the maintenance of the environment is directly responsible for Ontario's most important piece of environmental land planning legislation?

Hon Mr Peterson: I know again of my honourable friend's strong views on this subject and the work he has done in this regard. We are always looking at the question of government organization, or reorganization, to make it as efficient as possible. My honourable friend knows that the escarpment commission is currently in the hands of the Minister of Municipal Affairs because it has essentially been a planning function.

That being said, there are people like himself and others who believe that should be transferred to the Ministry of the Environment to give it, shall we say, a different cachet or a different emphasis inside the government. I say to my honourable friend, I will take that matter under advisement with my colleagues with respect to the organization and the ultimate authority in that regard. I appreciate his advice in that matter.

RENT REGULATION

Mr D. S. Cooke: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. I am raising the case of about 1,300 tenants who have been given notice that their rents will be going up by 25 to 29 per cent. The buildings are owned by W J Holdings Ltd, which has units on Gamble Avenue, Cosburn Avenue, St Dennis Drive, Grenoble Drive, 200 Gateway Boulevard and Cedarcroft Boulevard. As I said, the rents are going to go up by 25 to 29 per cent. Can the minister tell us whether under his proposal tenants will have any input in the right to veto the capital expenditures that are the major reason for the rent increases in this case?

Hon Mr Sweeney: My honourable friend will be well aware of the fact that much of the rental housing stock in this community and in other communities across the province is now 30 to 35 years old and is certainly going to have to have some significant renovations and repairs done. He will also be aware of the fact that in a number of cases those landlords have been ordered by the municipal government to do some of these major repairs. I cannot speak to the particular ones that he is mentioning, but I just want to put it in that context.

With respect to the second part of his question, there definitely will be a requirement for the landlord to disclose well in advance to the tenant what work is contemplated, what time it will take and what the cost will be. The tenant will then, either individually or collectively with others in the building, have an opportunity to discuss with the landlord alternatives to the landlord's proposal, but there will not be a veto.

Mr D. S. Cooke: I knew that was the answer, but I think the way the minister and some of his members have been trying to attempt to sell this proposal has been, on the contrary, to make it look as if tenants are going to have real input. The fact of the matter is that his proposal will do nothing to change the status quo and landlords will continue to use rent review to introduce massive increases in rents.

I do, however, want to ask a supplementary based on the minister's answer. He indicated that in many cases the buildings across this province are 30 to 35 years old. These buildings are about 20 to 25 years old. Why is it that tenants, under the minister's rent review legislation, have to pay huge rent increases all at once in order to compensate landlords who have deliberately neglected buildings for years and years, and as a result the buildings are no longer affordable and these people have absolutely no place to live because there is no affordable co-op and non-profit housing available in this community?

Hon Mr Sweeney: I would remind my honourable friend that in this community alone, in the Toronto area, during the next three years over 40,000 units of non-profit and co-op will have been built. I doubt very much if he can find any other place in Canada that can match that kind of record.

The second point I would make is that the honourable member suggests that all repairs being done by landlords are a result of neglect. That is obviously not true. As a matter of fact, as a home owner himself he will well be aware of the fact that after 20 years he has to replace his roof. That is not necessarily on the basis of neglect. The same thing can happen to an apartment landlord.

The third point is that, as the honourable member is well aware, there is a provision within the legislation right now that where neglect is obvious and can be demonstrated, then there is a penalty to the landlord with respect to that application.

RECYCLING

Mr Sterling: I have a question to the Minister of the Environment. Can the minister tell me why we require beer cans and beer bottles to be recycled if they are manufactured here in Canada but when we bring in imported beer we do not require recycling of those cans or bottles? Why is that?

Hon Mr Bradley: The member would know first of all that there are taxes, put on by the provincial Treasurer, which deal with these matters designed to support recycling efforts in Ontario. These are matters which are to be discussed by officials of both the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations. I will continue to pursue this matter with the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations.

As the member has mentioned, there is a difference in the treatment of the two. For our purposes, we will certainly be continuing to pursue that with that ministry. We know that in Ontario we see some tremendous recycling rates that have been, I would suggest to the member, the envy of people right across Ontario. The member will see that the blue boxes, or the recycling depots in areas where there are not blue boxes, are full of these containers which are then recycled, which are of—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon Mr Bradley: —benefit to our society in a different use.

Mr Sterling: I assume from that answer that the minister is embarrassed to admit that there is a problem.

I would like to ask the minister a second question relating to the same issue. When Brewers' Retail, which is a privately run organization, takes the cans and bottles back for the recycling process, when the private sector can recycle, why can our own government-run stores, the Liquor Control Board of Ontario stores, not do at least that: take back the bottles, take back the cans and recycle them? It does not make sense to me.

Hon Mr Bradley: First of all, the member will know that the recycling of those particular containers is dealt with through the recycling programs in the province of Ontario. The Treasurer put a five-cent tax on each of those containers to ensure that there would be money for those purposes. I can tell the member that indeed this year almost \$55 million in total is allocated to recycling in this province. Any of these cans to which the member makes reference of course can be put into the blue box; the bottles can be put into the blue box.

The member will also recognize that in terms of Brewers' Retail, for instance, there are pretty consistent sizes of bottles, which can be utilized again, whereas in the situation with the bottles that contain liquor—I am not as familiar with those as perhaps the member is—I can tell the member there are so many coming from so many different sources that to send them back to Portugal, for instance, or—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon Mr Bradley: —Italy, France or many of the other places where some of these products are made would not be very practical. That is why the recycling effort has been enhanced in the province.

HAZARDOUS SPILLS

Miss Roberts: My question today is to the Minister of the Environment. As the minister is aware, a number of people in our province are very concerned about being informed as quickly and as thoroughly as possible when a spill occurs which may

affect people's health or the environment. As a result of an oil spill in Kettle Creek in my riding, citizens have questioned me about what the government of Ontario can do to keep the general public informed when a spill or other suspected incident is reported to the Ministry of the Environment and what would be the method used by ministry officials to follow up with concerned citizens in order that they can continue to be kept informed.

Hon Mr Bradley: That is an excellent question; the member for Elgin always asks excellent questions. By the way, she also corresponds with me on many occasions and, on a personal basis, makes representations on behalf of her riding.

I want to tell the member that we have set up in Ontario what is called a spills action centre which is in operation seven days a week, 24 hours a day, so that spills can be reported and responded to appropriately by officials of the ministry or indeed by any other departments that are involved in a spill, such as fire departments and police departments.

In terms of the ongoing situation, when a spill is reported the investigations and enforcement branch may be notified and will conduct a thorough investigation, the purpose of which is to determine first of all whether there has been a violation of any law in the province of Ontario and, if there has, to ensure that those people are prosecuted. In terms of the other staff, such as the abatement staff, it would be a matter of continuing to monitor to see what damage—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Miss Roberts: If an origin for the oil spill cannot be found, then who is responsible for ensuring that an incident such as the one in Kettle Creek is cleaned up?

Hon Mr Bradley: The owner and the handler of the material that is spilled are automatically responsible for the cleanup and restoration under the spills bill of the province of Ontario, which was proclaimed by this government after it sat on the desk of somebody for some five years or something like that.

In the case of Kettle Creek, which the member makes reference to, where it is not known who is responsible for the spill, the province can clean up and charge back to the spiller under the spills bill once it has been found. In this case a \$22,000 cleanup took place, and the Ministry of Transportation and the Ministry of the Environment combined in that.

The investigations and enforcement branch is currently investigating any potential violation, and the member can be assured that the branch will continue to audit and look at any of the potential spilling industries in the area or other sources to cut those off.

1510

PAY EQUITY

Mr Hampton: My question is for the Minister of Labour. Early in 1988, two women employed as health care aides at Hogarth Westmount Hospital in Thunder Bay applied for an equal pay survey under section 33 of the Employment Standards Act. After some time of studies and surveys, the Ministry of Labour formally got back to the women involved and indicated to them that they were indeed correct in making their claim for equal pay, that the two women and 49 other women involved were indeed doing the same work as a number of men but were being paid about \$1 an hour less. The Ministry of Labour ordered Hogarth Westmount Hospital to pay.

The formal order to pay came down on 5 December 1989. Some three weeks later, Hogarth Westmount Hospital indicated to the 51 female health care aides that their jobs were going to be phased out. Does it not strike the minister as passing strange? A little while after the formal order to pay comes down, equal pay for equal work, and after discussions have been going on for over six months, the hospital suddenly decides, "If we have to pay more for these women, we don't need them any more." Does that not strike the minister as a little strange?

Hon Mr Phillips: I tend to have a habit of looking into a matter before I reach a conclusion on it. I would be happy to look into the matter. I think the member will find that, if this is a hospital like all other hospitals in the province, it has a duly elected board that serves to administer the hospital. Rather than comment specifically on the case, I would be happy to look into the matter that the member has raised and inquire as to why the hospital would have reached that decision, to satisfy ourselves that it was a fair decision. But as I say, I would rather not jump to a conclusion in advance of knowing the facts.

Mr Hampton: I appreciate the Minister of Labour's willingness to look into the situation. I might tell the minister that, from the sources I have, the union was told by the hospital administration that it simply did not have the money in its budget to pay these women what the Ministry of Labour had adjudged them as being worth; therefore, things had to change.

I would also like to ask the minister to check this while he is at it: The Ministry of Labour decided that each woman was due about \$3,500 to \$4,000 in retroactive pay for two years. The hospital said to the women: "If you accept immediately, you can have \$2,000 in two weeks. If you want more than that, it is going to take some considerable amount of time to discuss the settlement." I would like to ask the minister to look into that and I would ask him whether he thinks that is a fair way to go about dealing with an important part of the Employment Standards Act.

Hon Mr Phillips: I would somewhat repeat what I said earlier; that is, I tend to like to know the facts before I comment on them. I appreciate that the member has received some information. I tend to look into it thoroughly, which I will do.

I might add that our employment standards branch receives about one million calls a year. It is a branch that receives a lot of comment from the public. We look into each of the matters thoroughly, we investigate them thoroughly and we attempt to reach a fair resolution in the best manner possible.

I will look into the particular matter that the member has raised, raise it with the appropriate authorities and get back to the member. I will be pleased to do that.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Cousens: I have a question for the Attorney General and he is not here. It has to do with Sunday shopping. I will direct the question to the Solicitor General. Since he has been the parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General and a close colleague, I trust that he will be apprised of something of the issue.

The Sunday shopping laws that this government has introduced are not working, at least in York region. Some 400 to 500 cases are awaiting trial in the Newmarket court to deal with illegal store openings on Sundays. These cases are piling up. None of the cases are being heard, and in fact the crown attorney's office in York region has adjourned all proceedings on illegal store openings until the Peel decision is made.

I would like to ask the Solicitor General whether he would support the position being taken by the York region crown attorney not to proceed with any of these cases.

Hon Mr Offer: I think it is important to acknowledge that any decision made by a local crown attorney in any one particular matter is within the discretion of that particular crown attorney. I think it is important to note that it is that responsibility which they have to exercise in myriad cases.

Dealing specifically with the Sunday shopping legislation, the member will be aware that it is a matter of responsibility of the local municipality, and certainly it is a matter of enforcement for the local police department. They are charged with that responsibility in laying charges where circumstances warrant. That is my understanding of what they are in fact doing, and I expect that that will continue.

Mr Cousens: It will not be any surprise to the Solicitor General, nor is it any surprise to the people in York region, that the law is now being broken every Sunday and fines are not acting as a deterrent to get people to obey what the government has made as the law. Cases are not even being heard in the Newmarket court. With the court backlog, if it is anything like some of the liquor licence laws that were broken, they just got dismissed because they were held for too long.

York regional council has now written a letter to the Attorney General requesting the Attorney General to take whatever action may be required to expedite the trial of charges laid under the Retail Business Holidays Act in the Newmarket provincial court. Would the Solicitor General get the Attorney General—or is there any influence he can bring—to respond to York regional council's request and direct the crown attorney in Newmarket to proceed immediately with these cases?

Hon Mr Offer: The member has alluded to a letter being directed to the Attorney General. I know all members of the House know of the responsibility of the Attorney General, and certainly his reaction to the receipt and the response is one which is within his responsibility and jurisdiction.

However, let me be very clear that in the laying of charges dealing with the policing not only of Sunday shopping legislation but of all forms of legislation and all laws, it is a matter of responsibility for the local police force, whether it be a municipal police force, a regional police force or, as the member well knows, the Ontario Provincial Police. That is what they are charged to do. They are charged to enforce the law, to lay charges where it is appropriate. I have every confidence that in this case, as well as other cases, our police forces across this province are doing just that.

MOTION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Mr Ward moved that, notwithstanding any previous order of the House, Mr B. Rae and Ms Bryden exchange places in the order of precedence for private members' business; that the order of precedence for private members' business be further amended by deleting ballot item number 44 in the name of Mr Reville; and that, notwithstanding standing orders 8(a) and 94(b), the House shall meet at 11 am on Thursday 19 April 1990 to consider one item of private members' business.

Motion agreed to.

Mr Sterling moved adjournment of the House.

1551

The House divided on Mr Sterling's motion, which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 20; nays 61.

PETITIONS

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

Mr Villeneuve: I have a petition signed by 570 very concerned citizens of eastern Ontario. I have also signed this petition, and it is addressed properly to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislature of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, understand that the Ontario government is implementing cost-cutting measures across the province in an effort to control the deficit.

"However, we, the undersigned, vehemently protest the termination of the engineering services of our agricultural engineer, Glen Slater, at the Alexandria office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. While servicing eastern Ontario for more than 23 years, Mr Slater has advised and directed land owners, contractors, drainage superintendents and municipal officials on a wide range of agricultural practices such as buildings, land use, manure storage, drainage and erosion control, to mention but a few. "With the mixed farming practices of eastern Ontario, there is a definite need for an engineer with experience in a wide range of activities. Over the years, Glen has displayed his expertise and gained the confidence of the local people through his handling"—

The Speaker: Order. I know the member has read the standing orders on petitions. He may put forth the content of the petition very briefly in his own words.

Mr Villeneuve: The content of the petition is to bring to this government the fact that cutting back 14 agricultural engineers from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food is not the way to operate and bring progress to Ontario agriculture, and I fully endorse this petition.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr Kozyra: I have two petitions at the request of the Minister of Northern Development for his constituents in Cochrane North. One is presented by 36 constituents in regard to the French Language Services Act and the other, presented and signed by 1,306 constituents, is in regard to environmental waste reduction methods in northern Ontario.

Mr Mackenzie moved the adjournment of the House.

Hon Mr Ward: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Under standing order 44(b), and I will read it, "When a motion for the immediate adjournment of the House has been defeated, no other such motion shall be made unless some intermediate proceeding has taken place." I would ask you to determine for the House the definition of an intermediate proceeding.

The Speaker: Order. We have a motion on the floor. The government House leader raised a point of order. I have read the standing order which says that there must be some other business take place. As I understand, I did call for petitions. There were petitions called. Other business has taken place. Therefore, I will have to rule the motion in order.

1626

The House divided on Mr Mackenzie's motion, which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 21; nays 52.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

VICTORIA COUNTY RAILWAY COMPANY LIMITED ACT, 1990

Mr Kerrio moved, on behalf of Mr Eakins, first reading of Bill Pr63, An Act respecting the Victoria County Railway Company Limited.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

NATIONAL CAPITAL CHILDREN'S ONCOLOGY CARE INC ACT, 1990

Mr Sterling moved second reading of Bill Pr8, An Act respecting National Capital Children's Oncology Care Inc.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

THE P & P MURRAY FOUNDATION ACT, 1990

Ms Poole moved second reading of Bill Pr36, An Act to revive The P & P Murray Foundation.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

1630

IMMANUEL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL SOCIETY OF EAST TORONTO ACT, 1990

Mr Curling moved second reading of Bill Pr40, An Act to revive The Immanuel Christian School Society of East Toronto.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION ACT, 1990

Mrs Sullivan moved second reading of Bill Pr44, An Act respecting The Royal Canadian Legion.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

LAKE OF THE WOODS DISTRICT HOSPITAL ACT, 1989

Mr Miclash moved second reading of Bill Pr47, An Act respecting Lake of the Woods District Hospital.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

393598 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 1989

Mrs O'Neill moved second reading of Bill Pr49, An Act to revive 393598 Ontario Limited.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

ASSOCIATION OF STONEY LAKE COTTAGERS INC ACT, 1990

Mr Adams moved second reading of Bill Pr55, An Act to revive Association of Stoney Lake Cottagers Inc.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

CITY OF NORTH BAY ACT, 1990

Mr Eves moved, on behalf of Mr Harris, second reading of Bill Pr57, An Act respecting the City of North Bay.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

GURSIKH SABHA CANADA ACT, 1990

Mr Curling moved second reading of Bill Pr58, An Act to revive Gursikh Sabha Canada.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

CITY OF CHATHAM FOUNDATION ACT, 1990

Mr McGuigan moved, on behalf of Mr Bossy, second reading of Bill Pr61, An Act to incorporate the City of Chatham Foundation.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

CITY OF TORONTO ACT, 1990

Mr Kanter moved second reading of Bill Pr62, An Act respecting the City of Toronto.

Motion agreed to.

Third reading also agreed to on motion.

TIME ALLOCATION (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on government notice of motion 30 on time allocation in relation to Bill 68, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance.

Mr Kormos: It has been useful to me and to other members, as we sit and listen to this discussion, to remind ourselves from time to time that we are not discussing Bill 68 here. That is the whole problem. We in the opposition dearly want to talk about Bill 68. We want to talk about the auto insurance legislation that the Liberals want to ram through this Legislature without any concern for tradition or procedure, and without any concern for democratic function.

The Liberals here at Queen's Park, this government, have demonstrated time and time and time again that they care not a tinker's damn for the role of the opposition. They have demonstrated time and time and time again their disdain. The

Liberals demonstrate their disdain for the electorate here in Ontario. They demonstrate that they are prepared to abrogate the rights of the opposition. They are prepared to abrogate the rights of drivers, taxpayers and indeed the rights of innocent injured victims to do the insurance companies' bidding.

As I say, if we were able to discuss Bill 68—one would think that is such a modest proposal—is it not, Mr Speaker?—to be able to debate a very unpopular piece of legislation, to be able to debate a piece of legislation that has garnered opposition across the province from workers, from professionals, from communities and from political organizations. The Liberal Party itself, in a number of ridings, has condemned this legislation. To be able to debate such a contentious piece of legislation seems so fundamental. It seems so simple.

1640

Indeed, one sees that the Liberals have become rather simple in their approach to this House. They have become simple. Members will note that there were two motions for adjournment this afternoon. I feel a little bit badly about that, because what it means is that it is going to take yet a few more days longer now than I would have otherwise had to spend talking about my concerns about this time allocation motion. Yet the frustration of the opposition, when we have a government with its jackboots on, when we have the Liberals here with their jackboots just stomping all over democracy and tradition, is not difficult to understand.

Obviously the attitude is one of, if things are going to be that way, if there is not going to be debate, if there is not going to be discussion, if the opposition is going to be muzzled or guillotined at the whim of an arrogant and supercilious Liberal majority, then let's lock the doors; let's go home.

You can take the standing orders, Mr Speaker, if I may, if I could have the standing orders. These are the standing orders. These are the rules, rules that the Liberals set, and the Liberals say, "No, forget it." Standing order 12? No, Liberals do not give a tinker's damn for standing order 12. Standing order 11? Liberals say, "No, toss it out; forget the standing orders." That is what the Liberals say. The rules? Oh, this one. Here is a rule that is designed to protect the rights of the opposition. Well, the Liberals have torn that up and thrown it away. Standing orders mean nothing. The standing orders mean nothing to the Liberals in this Legislature. They have taken the rules and they have ground them into the ground with their jackboots. No respect for procedure. No respect for—

Mr Pouliot: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: With great, high respect indeed for the member for Welland-Thorold, my colleague and distinguished friend, I would like to respectfully request that I get another book on standing orders, for this was my book and it has been tampered with. I am talking about the former standing orders.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Cureatz): Of course, it was not a point of order, but I know the member for Parkdale has a true point of order.

Mr Ruprecht: I think so. On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I am asking you to check whether this member is destroying government property and therefore should reimburse this government for destroying its property.

The Acting Speaker: Well, of course, it is not the Speaker's role to determine whether he was destroying public property. I shall have to rule that it was not a valid point of order, and as a result continue on with the debate from the member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos: I may crumple a piece of paper to illustrate a point. The Liberals have destroyed 100 years of tradition. The Liberals have destroyed the rights of the opposition. The Liberals stomp on the obligations of the opposition. The Liberals sit here as spokespeople for the insurance industry. There is no doubt about that in anybody's mind. But do they speak for their constituents? Do they speak for the drivers in their ridings? No. Do they speak for the drivers who are going to face premium increases of up to 50 per cent? No.

Do they speak for the innocent injured victims? We know that if this legislation passes—and the Liberals want it passed so badly they can taste it—95 per cent of all innocent injured victims will receive not a penny, not a nickel, not a dime in compensation for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life.

So the Liberals speak for the insurance industry. Again, there is no doubt about that, but they do not speak for those innocent injured victims. Do they speak for the taxpayers? Of course not. They speak for the insurance industry that is going to be subsidized to the tune of \$141 million minimum, plucked from the taxpayers' pockets by this government to piece off an already prosperous insurance industry.

It is not hard for me to stand here and tell members why we need time to debate Bill 68. And it is similarly not hard for you, Mr Speaker, and these Liberals to understand why their House leader and their Minister of Financial Institutions do not want to debate Bill 68. It is not hard to understand why the parliamentary assistant, the member for Guelph, does not want to discuss Bill 68. He fled from it during the course of committee hearings. The minister was not there and when the parliamentary assistant showed up, he quaked in response to the opposition that was expressed.

Remember, it was the parliamentary assistant, the Liberal member for Guelph, who was sent out to the front line by his minister who hid in the bunker all the while. It is that same member for Guelph, the parliamentary assistant, who told the press that the Liberals got hammered by the opposition to this bill. He told that to the press and the press reported it. The member for Guelph remembers that. The press clipping service for the member for Guelph was really busy that day because here were all these headlines: The member for Guelph, Liberal parliamentary assistant, says, "We got hammered by the opposition to Bill 68." That is why he does not want to talk about it.

Let me tell members why I do. Let me tell members why the members of the New Democratic Party want to discuss Bill 68: because we know it is bad legislation. We know it is going to hurt drivers; we know it is going to hurt innocent injured victims; we know it is going to hurt taxpayers. That is why we want to debate Bill 68 as thoroughly as need be for the members of this House to make an intelligent decision when it comes time to support or oppose it.

The member for Sudbury has had the benefit of guidance from his riding association. The Liberal riding association up in Sudbury said to its member, "Please, member, don't support Bill 68; don't vote for Bill 68." The Liberals themselves in Guelph have been planning it and the message has not been delivered yet, but up in Sudbury they actually did it. They passed a resolution.

Mr Allen: The same thing in Hamilton Centre.

Mr Kormos: And in Hamilton Centre. Let me tell members why. Let me tell members about Mr Kassam in Mississauga. Before I tell members about Mr Kassam and why he is relevant to this conversation, I again want to tell them about the

people who are paying rapt attention to this debate. People across Ontario know how important it is that Bill 68 be debated, people like Angela Johnson in Waterloo who phones up and says, "Keep it up." She supports what we are doing and she calls herself a soon-to-be-ex-Liberal.

Steve Doan from Wallaceburg phones and says: "Thank you for the effort you are putting on the time allocation motion. There are a lot of people who are behind you and support what you're doing." Steve Doan from Wallaceburg is paying attention to what is happening. I tell members, I am thankful to Mr Doan for taking the time to call in. He is obviously concerned about what the Liberals are doing to democracy in this province and about what they are doing to drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims by virtue of Bill 68.

1650

Dennis Gibson in Thunder Bay phones and leaves a short message: "Been watching you on television. Keep up the good work." Again, Mr Gibson is paying attention to what is happening here and he is concerned about what the Liberals are doing to drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims in this province.

Vince Azzarello from Mississauga phones in. He says he is ashamed to be a Liberal and will not be voting Liberal next time. "The whole bunch of us are voting NDP next time." I appreciate that it is difficult in 1990 in this province to admit that one is a Liberal. It is something that one does only with some hesitation and with some concern about one's reputation in one's community. Mr Azzarello phones up and acknowledges that he is a Liberal, but he says at the same time that he is ashamed because of what these Liberals are doing to the people of Ontario in Bill 68.

Mr Azzarello is not alone in his own party. The Liberals in the riding of Sudbury prevail upon their member to vote against this legislation. The Liberals in the riding of Hamilton Centre passed a resolution prevailing upon their member to vote against this legislation. The Liberal riding association up in Sudbury East—Lord knows they cannot get a Liberal elected up there—felt sufficiently responsible to prevail upon the sitting Liberals, as they are now—just wait until the next election; they will not be here. This next election is going to mean retirement for a whole bunch of Liberals sitting here in Ontario, especially if they persist in voting for the insurance companies and selling out the little people of Ontario in exchange for the big profits of the insurance companies.

Stan Miszuk from Mississauga said that if Bill 68 goes through he is going to have to sell his car. He says, "Keep up the good work anyway." He knows his insurance premiums are going to go up by as much as 50 per cent. That is why he has to peddle his car.

The Liberals in Ontario are forcing people like Mr Miszuk off the road. Do members know who is going to be among the biggest bunch of people forced out of their cars? Senior citizens. They are going to be among the people who effectively face the highest premium increases—

Mr Callahan: That is baloney.

Mr Kormos: The Honourable Mr Justice Osborne said so, Mr Justice Osborne of the Supreme Court of Ontario, trial division. Don McKay, the general manager of the Facility Association, said so. That is going to be the net effect of the Liberals ramming Bill 68 through.

Let me get back to Mr Kassam from Mississauga. This is exactly why the Minister of Financial Institutions and his

former best friend, his parliamentary assistant, do not want to debate Bill 68. Would you still be friends with the Minister of Financial Institutions if he sent you out into the front lines while he stayed behind protected in the bunker? That is not much of a friend, I will tell you that.

That is exactly why these guys do not want to debate Bill 68. They will do anything they have to do to avoid debating Bill 68. They will avoid debating Bill 68 because they will not be able to address the type of difficulty that Mr Kassam finds himself in. Let me tell the members about Mr Kassam. This is exactly why the Liberals want this time allocation motion: because of Mr Kassam and thousands and thousands of others like him for whom Bill 68 offers no assistance, no help, but it just grinds the screw even tighter. Good people; good, hardworking people who pay their bills, who work hard and who expect their government to represent their interests—

Mr Pouliot: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: Since it is not possible under the resolution that was put forth last week with respect to going to the crux of the matter, which is Bill 68, I must point out that perhaps the House is not duly constituted and I ask you respectfully to check for a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Lake Nipigon has requested a quorum count.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is present.

The Acting Speaker: The clerk has pointed out to me that a quorum is present.

Mr Kormos: It is about time there were enough Liberals in here to constitute a quorum, let me tell you that, Mr Speaker.

Let me tell you about Mr Kassam, Mr Speaker, and let me tell you why Mr Kassam is important to this debate. Let me tell you what the insurance industry, which has these Liberals in its back pockets, is doing to Mr Kassam. Mr Kassam had an auto insurance policy with Laurentian Casualty through the brokerage of J. F. T. Fraser and Associates Insurance Brokers Ltd. This is not a pleasant story and I am not about to laugh either to Mr Kassam's face or behind his back, quite frankly. I am interested in the people who find a tragic scenario like Mr Kassam's, what perversion would permit those people to find it humorous.

What happened was that Laurentian Casualty maintained that it had a problem with Fraser and Associates, the brokers, so it cut off the brokers. They told Fraser and Associates, "You can't handle our insurance any more." At the same time, they sent Mr Kassam a letter saying: "Your insurance simply ain't going to be renewed, because you deal with Fraser and Associates, brokers. We no longer are handled by Fraser and Associates, which means you are not going to be renewed by Laurentian Casualty."

Mr Kassam had a six-star rating with Laurentian Casualty, which he obtained through Fraser and Associates. Notwithstanding what Laurentian told Mr Kassam, Fraser and Associates said: "We do not understand. We have never had a problem with Laurentian Casualty. We can't understand why they are dumping us, unloading us, as one of their brokers."

Fraser and Associates speculated, in response to, quite frankly, the almost panicky inquiries of Mr Kassam—because he was being told, "No, you can't be renewed"—that since they had no problems with Laurentian and never had, they could not recall or could not think of anything that would cause them to be dumped. This is an insurance brokerage firm which Mr Kassam tells me told him, "Maybe Laurentian is only taking this

action in order to terminate their old policies in order to get new clients who will have to pay substantially more for insurance."

Members should not forget the so-called caps on increases are not transferable, are they? There is no effective rating system. So Fraser and Associates explained to Mr Kassam that they were getting shafted by Laurentian Casualty so that Laurentian Casualty could drop its current customers and get new ones. This is the premium shuffle. Remember when we talked about that months and months ago, Mr Speaker? The member for Nickel Belt talked about it too, when he talked about his constituents being exposed to the same sort of insurance flip.

Mr Philip: Any competent lawyer would understand that.

Mr Kormos: I know the Speaker does, because I know with his background in law his mind is trained. It is a finely honed, finely developed mechanism. He is trained to zero in on the issue and not be distracted by peripheral things, by secondary things. The Speaker, as a skilled member of the bar—by that I mean a lawyer; you know that, Mr Speaker—

Mr Philip: An even more skilled Speaker.

Mr Kormos: It contributes to his expertise as Speaker, which has been noted not just here in this House but beyond this House as well. I have been to communities all over Ontario and heard a variety of comments about the Liberals. I will not repeat them because I know that would violate the standing orders. Are those standing orders still in effect or have the Liberals abandoned those as well? I tell you, Mr Speaker, I hear nothing but compliments about you. You have left your mark on this assembly, I tell you that, and you have made an impression on people all over Ontario.

1700

Let's talk about Mr Kassam, a six-star rating, dumped by Laurentian Casualty, and the only reason that J. F. T. Fraser and Associates Insurance Brokers can speculate on is that they are dumping a whole bunch of people so they can do the old premium shuffle, the old premium flip.

Mr Kassam called Laurentian and he said: "Look, forget about Fraser and Associates; I know you do not let them handle your insurance any more. Please renew me. Let me buy my insurance directly from you." Laurentian told him that they cannot do that because then Fraser and Associates would sue them for taking one of their customers. Mr Kassam says: "No, you do not understand. Listen, Laurentian Casualty, please. I tell you what I am going to do. Fraser and Associates will sign a letter indemnifying you, promising not to sue you." That is why Laurentian said they could not renew him, right? They said, "We do not have Fraser handle our business any more, and we cannot take you on directly because we are afraid that Fraser would sue us for taking one of their customers." Laurentian backed out of that one, too. They refused to accept his letter of indemnification from Fraser and Associates.

The catch is that Mr Kassam was paying \$1,400 a year for insurance, with a six-star rating. That is a whole lot of money to begin with. Laurentian has unloaded him, and the best policy that Mr Kassam can find to date is one for a \$2,200-a-year premium. Do members want to know something? He is going to have to take that, if these Liberals get Bill 68 rammed through this Legislature as they intend to do, as they are going to try really hard to do unless we stop them. It is up to us, as an opposition, to stop them, to stop the Liberals from ramming this legislation through, because the legislation is all about making big, new profits for the insurance industry. In doing that, it sells

out the working people, the senior citizens, the young men and women, students and newly employed people, farmers, the small business people, because these are the people who are going to face incredible premium increases and have incredibly less coverage and fewer benefits.

Indeed, members know, and more and more people in this House and in this province know, that if this legislation passes, 95 per cent of all innocent injured victims will not get a penny in compensation for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life. That is what this legislation is all about, and this legislation does not do a thing for Mr Kassam. It does not do a thing to control the insatiable greed of the auto insurance industry in this province. It does not do a thing to control the shabby, unacceptable conduct that Mr Kassam has been subjected to.

That is what this time allocation motion is all about. The Minister of Financial Institutions does not want to have to deal with the Mr Kassams and the Laurentian Casualties of Ontario, because the Minister of Financial Institutions and the Premier of Ontario and the Liberals sitting in this House are prepared to sell out Mr Kassam. They are prepared to throw him to the dogs. They will forsake Mr Kassam and thousands and tens of thousands like him, because the Liberals are in the back pocket of the auto insurance industry in Ontario.

Never before have these Liberals seen such a contentious bit of legislation. Where have members ever seen or heard, in the history of this Premier's government, of legislation that is so thoroughly opposed by people across the province? Yet this government persists in ramming it through.

Mr Philip: Sunday shopping, maybe.

Mr Kormos: Sunday shopping, close. Whether it tops it or not, we are talking close. The member knows that. But Bill 68, the auto insurance legislation, is importantly supported, by and large, by one single group in this province. That is the private, corporate automobile insurance industry, which has not got much of a reputation that it can be very proud of when it comes to how it has treated its customers and injured people in the past, has it?

Let me tell members what Angelo Bucciarelli from Mississauga says. Mr Bucciarelli of Mississauga writes to me and says, "I am writing you this letter in order to inform you that I am behind you 100 per cent in regards to the Liberals' auto insurance (biggest fraud ever conceived by an arrogant government) scheme. Can you please ask the Premier of this government how this so-called no-fault auto insurance, written for the government by the auto insurance companies, is supposed to benefit" people like Mr Bucciarelli, who has four kids, aged 10, 5, 4 and two and a half. How is it going to help them in any way, shape or form? It is going to eliminate compensation for pain and suffering and for loss of enjoyment of life for at least 95 per cent of all innocent injured accident victims. It is going to eliminate that.

Those innocent injured victims will not have a right to that compensation. It is not a matter even of not having the right; it simply will not be made available to them. And do members know that those same victims will not be able to use the courts in an effort to obtain recourse against the big, powerful, wealthy auto insurance companies? Bill 68 also does that. It denies them the right to access to the courts.

Mr D. W. Smith: How do you know?

Mr Kormos: Anybody who would say how do I know is either a complete dummy, or a complete mouthpiece for the auto insurance industry, or simply so naïve—anybody who

would deny that is simply so naïve as to not understand what this legislation is all about. They simply do not understand.

Mr Bucciarelli writes, "No-fault? No thanks. Please do not pass this ridiculous, insulting bill upon the people of Ontario. Come next election," Mr Bucciarelli suggests that "the Liberals might apply for jobs in the many insurance head offices in London and stay there." So we see the opposition to Bill 68 is widespread.

Clearly, the Liberals at Queen's Park have not been listening to the people in their ridings, have not been listening to the people who appeared in front of the government committee with its brief, brief hearings. They have not been listening to the Mr Kassams, to the Mr Bucciarelli and that is, similarly, why they do not want to debate this legislation here in the House. That is why this time allocation is before us.

Let me tell you about another little scam going on around here, Mr Speaker. It is the myth that Bill 68 puts an end to tied selling for insurance companies. You know what tied selling is, right? It is where the insurance company will not sell you auto insurance unless you get house insurance from it as well.

Now, the Minister of Financial Institutions is loath to acknowledge that it takes place. After all, he would paint a picture of auto insurance companies such that Mother Teresa would pale in comparison. The Minister of Financial Institutions would create an image of auto insurance companies that would portray them as benign and generous and charitable institutions. Come on. There is not a person out there who has ever had to deal with an auto insurance company who could not say, "Bullfeathers."

Are you not pleased with me, Mr Speaker? There is a lot of self-control and a lot of discipline standing here right now, because I would really like to tell you what I really think about Bill 68. Are you sure that standing order is still in effect, or did the Liberals wipe that one out too?

1710

Let me tell members about tied selling, because if any of them do not think it is happening right now in Ontario, they had better wake up and pull out their chequebooks. Let me tell members about David Hanuschuk, 233 Rosemount Avenue, Port Colborne, Ontario. Port Colborne is not in the riding of Welland-Thorold, Port Colborne is in Niagara South. Mr Hanuschuk gives me this little memo from Niagara Insurance Brokers. It is dated 27 March 1990. It is so personal as to say not "Mr Hanuschuk" but "David." Members get those letters in the mail, ones that are addressed to them by their first names. That is when they put their hands on their wallets because they know the next paragraph has to do with making their wallets a little bit lighter. But it says, "David."

Mr Philip: I wonder why he did not write to his own MPP.

Mr Kormos: I cannot for the life of me understand why he would not go to his own MPP, except that his own MPP is a Liberal. I suppose it is very difficult for a constituent whose MPP is supporting the insurance companies to expect that MPP to in any way challenge those same insurance companies when they get heavy-handed, as they are more often than not. Would members not think that is a fair inference to draw? It would seem to me a reasonably fair inference to draw.

"David: Re auto renewal for April 26, 1990"—David's time is running out.

"1. Due to company policy, our office will be unable to renew your auto policy unless the homeowner's or tenant's package is placed with the same insurance company. Our office

is prepared to quote a package price for both policies." Oh, I bet they are. Look at what they are saying: that he will not be given insurance for his car unless he also buys a homeowner's or tenant's package.

"Please compare our competitive prices so that you may make a choice in your best interests. If we do not hear from you by the above expiry date, your auto policy will lapse with our office."

It is signed by Art Bull. What an appropriate surname—no disrespect to Mr Bull. Considering the type of message he has to deliver on behalf of his insurance company to people like David Hanuschuk, how appropriate.

That is tied selling. The irony here is that David Hanuschuk knows how uncharitable the auto insurance industry can be. David Hanuschuk would dearly love to buy a homeowner's or tenant's package with the same company so that he can keep his auto insurance, because he knows he is liable to be forced into the Facility Association, not because he is a bad driver. We know that already. We know that the ranks of the Facility Association have more than doubled in the last year, not with bad drivers but with perfectly good drivers who are being denied insurance coverage by regular auto insurance companies. Mr Hanuschuk would dearly love to avoid that.

The member for Guelph should not go away.

Mr Ferraro: I want to get closer.

Mr Kormos: Because we have more to talk about. The minister is not prepared to listen; perhaps his parliamentary assistant is going to pay some attention. Perhaps before 26 April he will be able to resolve the difficulty for Mr Hanuschuk. Or are the Liberals, including the parliamentary assistant, so deep in the back pocket of the insurance companies in this province that they will not take on the challenge of confronting a greedy, heavy-handed auto insurance industry that is going to persist in tied selling?

That is what Mr Hanuschuk is faced with. As I said, he would dearly love to keep his auto insurance. He would love to be able to buy household or tenant's insurance. Unfortunately, he does not own a house and he is not a tenant. He cannot. The option simply is not available to him. So Mr Hanuschuk says: "No, I do not trust the auto insurance industry in this province. I do not trust them as far as I can throw them. I do not trust the Liberals in Ontario to protect me against that same auto insurance industry."

Why? Because he knows what the Liberals' track record is. He has seen the Liberal track record. He has seen their track record when it comes to the auto insurance industry. Mr Hanuschuk knows, as I do, that the auto insurance industry in this province greased, paid off, Liberal candidates. I am sorry; there were donations. Where I come from, I am prone to call them grease, okay? Payoffs. Do members know? "You stroke my back and I will stroke yours," that type of approach. How else can you justify this blind support for bad legislation that is before this Legislature now? How else can you justify the Liberals' frantic desire to avoid any debate about Bill 68?

Yes, those very same Liberals sitting to your right, Mr Speaker. They received over \$100,000 in campaign contributions from the auto insurance industry during the general election of 1987. That is what is recorded. I can only speak about the donations to the extent that they were documented. Over \$100,000 went into the campaign pockets of Liberal candidates in the last general election, tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars that the auto insurance industry spent on third-party advertising during that same election.

Drivers in Ontario have been hit with increase after increase, and now they know where some of that money is going: It is going into the pockets of Liberal candidates. So Mr Hanuschuk knows that. He knows that he cannot count on Liberals at Queen's Park to protect him against auto insurance companies, because those Liberals are in the back pocket of those same auto insurance companies. They are so deep in the back pocket of the same auto insurance companies that these Liberals are spitting out lint. We have seen it.

Let me tell you, Mr Speaker, about an interesting publication that came across my desk. I have made reference to the Canadian Underwriter magazine. Remember, a couple of days ago I referred to the March 1990 issue?

I came across, or rather it came across me, another little publication, and again, this is what we are talking about when we talk about this time allocation motion, this closure motion, by the Liberals here at Queen's Park. It is a little publication called Thompson's World Insurance News. I just kind of like the look of it and the feel of it. It is not a glossy, expensively manufactured publication like Canadian Underwriter.

The editor is Tony Thompson, the deputy editor Ann Nicholson. This is volume 2, number 11, so that would suggest to me that it is a fairly new publication. It is available at 415 Leslie Street, Toronto. I suppose that if people were to write to Thompson's World Insurance News at 415 Leslie Street, Toronto, or phone them at 461-8800—that number once again is 461-8800 for Thompson's World Insurance News, 415 Leslie Street, Toronto, M4M 3E3. M4M, M as in "money"; 3E3, E as in "everyone." That is what this insurance legislation is all about; it is going to cost everyone more money so that the insurance companies can enjoy a windfall profit of some \$1 billion in the first year alone.

1720

But, as I say, I kind of like this publication. I only saw it for the first time today. It mentioned my name a couple of times, and I do not want the members to suspect for a moment that is why I am more partial to Thompson's World Insurance News than I am to Canadian Underwriter, but it is a fact.

One interesting little note in here, there is a little news item called "Don't Count Your Chickens." "Word out of Queen's Park has it that, despite what the courts might decide about the threshold in Bill 68, once the Liberals lose power, the provisions are a dead duck." Even within the insurance industry there is an awareness that this is a kamikaze bill for the Liberals at Queen's Park. "Don't Count Your Chickens." That is a message to the insurance companies in Ontario.

"Word out of Queen's Park has it that, despite what the courts might decide about the threshold in Bill 68, once the Liberals lose power"—they do not say "if," they say "once the Liberals lose power"—"the provisions are a dead duck." That is a not-so-subtle message to that same industry that this bill is very valuable to the industry. The Liberals are laying the eggs for the auto insurance industry so that the industry can harvest the chickens.

The other reference in this little publication, Thompson's World Insurance News, is the criticism that I made of the Insurance Bureau of Canada a few days ago. I cannot remember when, just about the time we started this discussion. I guess that was more than a few days ago.

Members will recall that I said that the Insurance Bureau of Canada figures regarding the claims payouts and the reserves were akin to fraudulent because they did not break down reserves as contrasted with actual payouts. We know that is how

insurance companies, auto insurance companies especially, create artificial losses so that they can report a loss when in fact they have made profits.

They are stuffing their pockets with money from drivers' premiums. It is the old case of their crying all the way to the bank. We know they are making profits. The auto insurance industry in this province has been talking about losing money for decades and decades, year after year. At the same time, they fight tooth and nail to retain control over what, according to them, is an unprofitable business. Poppycock. It just cannot be. The world is not like that.

The little article in Thompson's World Insurance News, 415 Leslie Street, Toronto, refers to my criticism of the IBC for failing to break down reserves as contrasted with actual claims paid out. But then they go on, because obviously they consulted the IBC. They went to the Insurance Bureau of Canada with my concerns about the IBC's own figures, and the IBC said that it had no breakdown to show what percentage had actually been paid and what was put by for reserves against claims. Once again, horsefeathers.

Don't tell me they do not have a breakdown. Baloney. They are not prepared to reveal those figures, because if they revealed those figures it would confirm, in fact, what I have suspected and believed firmly about that same industry and what people like Irene Bass, the actuary retained during the course of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board hearings, had to say about them, that they inflate the reserves so as to create an artificial image of losing money, when in fact they are very profitable.

It is interesting when one looks at that and understands once again how important it is to these Liberals to not have full debate about Bill 68. Thompson's World Insurance News—and, again, this is sort of a little insider newsletter for the insurance industry—talks about the potential constitutional challenge to Bill 68, specifically to the threshold, because that is what Bill 68 is all about. It is about this threshold, the standard that you have to meet before you can even think about being compensated for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life. Before we can even begin to think about it, we have to pass that threshold. That threshold is the most onerous threshold in all of the whole insured world. What it says is basically this: "You have to be dead or damned close to it before you can even think about being compensated for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life."

There have been some opinions expressed that that is unconstitutional. Among other things, psychological injuries are excluded by virtue of the threshold. Catch this one, Mr Speaker: This is news, because not only have independent counsel here in the province of Ontario, competent responsible counsel, suggested clearly that the threshold contained in this government's legislation is unconstitutional, but the Insurance Bureau of Canada's own legal staff—the parliamentary assistant, the member for Guelph, should listen carefully—said this, "There is a possibility that the threshold excluding psychological injury might be deemed a restriction under the Constitution." Even the insurance industry and its own counsel—

Mr Ferraro: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I want to say to my friend—

The Deputy Speaker: Under which standing order is that?

Mr Ferraro: Standing order 32(c). Mr Speaker, I just want to point out to my friend opposite that indeed the quote was misquoted in conversation with Mr Thompson—

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Ferraro: —and his view is that it is constitutional. So I must just say to my friend that I would not—

The Deputy Speaker: Nice attempt, but it is not a point of order, of course.

Mr Kormos: That reminds me. I think I mentioned to this Legislature a long time ago now a quote by the great analytical philosopher Wittgenstein, and what Wittgenstein said at the turn of the century was, "Whereof one cannot speak thereof one must be silent." I tell that to the member for Guelph because—I was going to read him the whole quote. I did not want to embarrass him with the whole quote and I wanted to be relatively kind. I feel sorry for the member for Guelph because of the way the Minister of Financial Institutions has mistreated him.

The Deputy Speaker: And it is still related to time allocation?

Mr Kormos: Of course, Mr Speaker; this is exactly what the issue is. This is exactly why the Liberals do not want to debate Bill 68. Is that not perfectly clear now? When one looks at the material that is available, one begins to understand how important it is to the Liberals to pass this time allocation motion, how important it is to the Liberals to impose closure on this legislation. When you look at the facts that would be disclosed during the course of a debate, a debate that the Liberals do not want, then you see why they are prepared to fight so hard and condemn so much to avoid that debate. They are prepared to take the standing rules and chuck them out. They are prepared to take over a century of tradition and stomp it lifeless with their jackboots.

Let's talk about what legal counsel for the IBC has to say about Bill 68. Counsel concedes that it is not likely that the whole bill will be declared invalid, but there was a possibility that the threshold wording excluding psychological injury might be deemed a restriction under the Constitution. Counsel for the IBC is contrasting the constitutionality of the balance of the legislation with the constitutionality of the threshold itself. Nobody has ever argued that the whole bill is going to be deemed unconstitutional, but responsible people have pleaded with this government to please do a reference, so that the constitutionality of the threshold can be tested before it begins to hurt innocent injured victims.

Mr Speaker, I told you some time ago that my passion in opposing this legislation was because every day that this legislation is delayed, there are perhaps 10, maybe 20, maybe 30 more innocent injured victims who will be compensated for their pain and suffering, as they rightly should be. What this bill will do once it is passed is deny those same innocent injured victims the right to compensation.

1730

How old are some of these pages, the new pages today? Are they 12, 13, 14 years old? Little kids, smart kids like these pages, with good futures ahead of them, with potential far greater than any of the Liberals sitting here, any one of these pages, these young people, will be condemned by Bill 68 to being denied, if he falls within that vast majority of at least 95 per cent of all innocent injured accident victims, the right to be compensated for pain and suffering and loss of enjoyment of life. I am not going to spend a lot of time right now on a lengthy illustration of that; I think I will do that tomorrow.

Again, it is a debate over the threshold that the Liberals want to avoid with this time allocation motion, this guillotine motion, this closure motion, the one they learned from their federal cousins, the Tories on Parliament Hill. Closure is no

more acceptable to this opposition here at Queen's Park than it is to the New Democratic Party in Ottawa when it is imposed by the Tories there. It has reached a point where—Liberal or Tory—one is hard pressed to make a distinction from one to the other.

Not only does the Insurance Bureau of Canada's own lawyer have some concerns about the constitutionality of the threshold in Bill 68, but independent counsel have as well, indeed to the point where Mr Star from Kingsway General Insurance wrote to the government expressing great concern about the constitutionality of the threshold in Bill 68. Mr Star prevailed upon the government to please address this important issue. Mr Star's perspective was from the point of view of saving money for the insurance industry. Members remember that, do they not?

Similarly, Mr Star imposed a deadline for a reply to that correspondence to the government, failing which he suggested that he was going to make that correspondence public. That is when the Minister of Financial Institutions set his little go-fers in action trying to lean on Mr Star so that he would not make that correspondence public. Do members remember that scenario? The minister sure remembers it. That is when the mandarins from the Ministry of Financial Institutions were sent out.

"If you can't lean on Star himself, then phone up major shareholders," which they did; they phoned up a major American shareholder and leaned on him. "Apply a little pressure, just apply a little pressure. Talk about how you're not making any threats, but it would sort of be better for them if they did what you said. Maybe inquire as to where his kids go to school in the process," a little bit of pressure so that Star will not release that letter because here is a criticism of the government. The criticism is basically this, "Test the constitutionality of the threshold before you impose it on the people of Ontario," before they impose it on the innocent injured victims of Ontario. That is all that is asked of the government. Yet their arrogance extends not just to the limits of this Legislature, but appears to extend beyond the powers that would be exercised by a court in the process of doing that very thing—testing the constitutionality.

I was reading a copy of the University of Western Ontario newspaper today and I saw an ad for a book in there. It said, "Now in stock at your university bookstore." The title of the book is *Asleep in the Fast Lane*. I thought, "My goodness, another story about the Liberals at Queen's Park?" I was mistaken. Indeed, it would appear that the impact of the Liberals has diminished to such a point where people would not think of writing books about them any more. Indeed, I suspect that the next book to be written is going to be an analysis of the members defeated in the next general election. Why, specifically? Because they supported Bill 68, because they sold out innocent injured victims and drivers and taxpayers in favour of the insurance industry. Why? Because they refused to permit debate on a most important issue before the Legislature.

I have never seen such obstructionist tactics as we have seen coming from this government over Bill 68. Look what happened. We had only just gotten finished our introductory comments during committee-of-the-whole consideration of Bill 68, we had only just begun to deal with Bill 68 in clause-by-clause, and these Liberals imposed this time allocation motion, this closure motion, this censure motion, this guillotine. We only just barely get into our discussion of that very same motion that we are talking about today, the time allocation motion, and then the Liberal House leader moves another motion. We

are not even finished talking about time allocation and he clutters the floor with yet another motion. So we spend a little bit of time last Thursday talking about his time extension motion, which interferes with the discussion of the time allocation motion, which is effectively interfering with debate of Bill 68, which is all we ever wanted to do in the first place, and he leaves his time extension motion sitting in limbo and then we come back to the time allocation motion.

No wonder the Liberals are confused. No wonder they are concerned about what is happening. No wonder there is a distinct impression that these Liberals are asleep in the fast lane. Here they are with the majority. Here they are with the potential to generate some real change in this province. Here they are with the potential to take on the insurance industry and not be its servant any more. Do they use that majority in such a way as to benefit the people of Ontario, the drivers of Ontario, the taxpayers of Ontario, the innocent injured victims? No. Those people are being sold out by these same Liberals, and the price was so modest. That is where the Liberals are in Ontario.

Let me tell you, Mr Speaker, I am going to start talking about Mr Justice Barr's comments regarding Bill 68. Now you will recall that I spent some time talking about Mr Justice Haines's comments regarding Bill 68. The reason I spent time on Mr Justice Haines's comments was because I wanted to illustrate to you and to the members of this Legislature that the issue is so significant and so worthy of debate that this time allocation motion is nothing more than a dismissal of democracy. Indeed, I can tell you that I received some distinct messages from Liberal backbenchers that left me with the impression that they were beginning to have concerns about the direction that their House leader, their Minister of Financial Institutions and their parliamentary assistant was leading them in.

As I told you, Mr Speaker, I had two goals in mind with respect to this time allocation motion. The first goal is to persuade the House leader to withdraw it. That is the honourable thing to do. It is the smart thing to do. The Liberal House leader need only send over a note. We have got pages ready to come to his side; any one of these young people is ready to run to his side so that they can pick up the note from him saying that he would be pleased to stand up and withdraw this motion. I would be pleased to get that message from him.

1740

Because look what has happened: The Liberals have been so frantically fleeing from debate that they have wasted over two weeks now on a discussion of their silly motions, first their time allocation motion and then their time extension motion, which interrupted their time allocation motion. As I have said, that time extension motion is suspended and we are back to time allocation until I get that note from the House leader saying that he is prepared to stand up and withdraw the time allocation motion that he put forward; that would end this stage of the discussion. Then we could start talking about Bill 68. That is what the people in Ontario want us to talk about. They want us to talk about Bill 68. That is what Mr Justice Barr would, I submit, want us to talk about, so that his concerns and his criticism of Bill 68 can be voiced and can be directed to this arrogant majority sitting here. I am going to talk about Mr Justice Barr.

I have some great concerns about this time allocation motion in view of the propaganda that Liberals are distributing. I refer to the Queen's Park Report, spring 1990, by the Liberal member for Mississauga West. Here it is. The layout, the

typesetting is impressive. The problem is he has what is called a special pull-out section that says, "Have your say." The impression that he would create with his constituents is reflected in the final page of that. It says: "Have your say. If you have concerns or questions that you wish to bring to my attention to regard to the Ontario motorist protection plan"—that is, Bill 68—"please use this space to outline them."

He conveniently has provided the smallest of spaces. That is okay. But my concern is that this publication by the member for Mississauga West would appear to create the impression that he was interested in eliciting commentary about Bill 68, criticism of Bill 68, critique of Bill 68. Yet his House leader does not want to permit debate over Bill 68.

The concern goes further, because not only is there a less-than-straightforward illusion being generated by this type of stuff—and I suspect that the member for Mississauga West is not alone among the Liberal ranks—but there is some commentary about what Bill 68 is about contained in that same householder—they are called householders; they are distributed to households in his riding, in the riding of Mississauga West—that cause me even greater concern. I wonder who wrote this stuff.

I am concerned myself with statements like, "Bill 68 will hold down insurance rates." How can that be? How can the member for Mississauga West tell his constituents that Bill 68 is going to hold down insurance rates when the Minister of Financial Institutions—the members heard the minister—said they are going to go up by as much as 50 per cent? There is a contradiction here. The member for Mississauga West says, "Bill 68 will hold down your premiums," yet the Minister of Financial Institutions says, "Your premiums are going to go up by as much as 50 per cent." What do you call that, Mr Speaker? I am not sure what to call it, but it sure generates some raised eyebrows, does it not, Mr Speaker?

That is just the beginning. How can the member for Mississauga West say that to his constituents? How can he do that when his own minister contradicts him? How can the member for Mississauga West, minister of something in his own mind, dare tell his constituents that Bill 68 is going to keep their premium rates down when the Minister of Financial Institutions promises—that is one promise that is going to be kept; you can bank on that, Mr Speaker—that premium rates are going to go up by as much as 50 per cent?

We know that thousands of people are going to be forced into Facility. Senior citizens, mature, hard-working retired people are going to be forced into Facility with premium rates of thousands of dollars a year. So Bill 68 is not going to hold down premium rates. Bill 68 is going to force them up by as much as 50 per cent. We know that to be true.

Let me run this one past you, Mr Speaker. The member for Mississauga West talks about the right to compensation. The member for Mississauga West says, "In cases of serious injury, when additional compensation may be required, access to the courts will be retained." The member for Mississauga West says that when you have a serious injury, access to the courts will be retained.

Would the page come up here, please? This page, Brian, if he were the victim of a motor vehicle accident, would receive not a penny in either no-fault or in compensation for pain and suffering, notwithstanding that he might suffer a broken arm, notwithstanding that he might suffer a broken leg or two broken legs or a broken back or a fractured skull or fractured ribs, because under this threshold those are not considered serious injuries.

Brian knows that a broken leg is a pretty serious injury. Brian knows that a broken back is a pretty serious injury. Brian knows that a fractured skull, fractured ribs or broken arms are pretty serious injuries. Yet Bill 68 says that you cannot be compensated for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life if you suffer a broken back or broken legs or broken arms or a fractured skull or if you suffer psychological injuries that render you disabled for the rest of your life. Those do not pass the threshold.

So how is it that the member for Mississauga West can write in this brochure that he distributes to households, to the constituents in his riding, "In cases of serious injury, access to the courts will be retained"? How much more serious do you want than a broken back or broken legs or fractured ribs or a fractured skull? You have to be dead or damn close to it, do you not?

The people of Ontario expect and indeed believe in the right of innocent injured victims to be compensated for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life. I know that people in the north, people in ridings represented by New Democrats, places like Algoma and Nickel Belt, sincerely believe that innocent injured victims should be compensated for pain and suffering and for loss of enjoyment of life. People in Welland-Thorold sincerely believe that. People in Beaches-Woodbine sincerely believe that. Do you want to know something, Mr Speaker? People in Mississauga West sincerely believe that too.

How is it that the member for Mississauga West can write to his constituents and say, "In cases of serious injury, when additional compensation may be required, access to the courts will be retained"? Surely to any thinking person a broken leg or a broken arm or fractured ribs or a broken back constitute a serious injury, do they not? Of course they do.

Yet we know that the threshold says, no, those people suffering those types of injuries cannot be compensated for pain and suffering, for loss of enjoyment of life. They are forbidden to be compensated even as innocent victims. Innocent injured victims cannot be compensated for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life unless they meet that threshold, and that threshold does not admit all the serious injuries, not by a long shot. You have to be dead or damned close to it.

1750

The member for Mississauga West says that those found to be criminally responsible for accidents will not receive income replacement benefits. I had to read that twice. The member for Mississauga West is a Liberal. He is far closer to the Minister of Financial Institutions than any of us in the opposition ranks are, and good for him.

But how could the member for Mississauga West publish that statement that those found to be criminally responsible for accidents will not receive income replacement benefits when that same member knows, or ought to know, that there are more than a few scenarios wherein drunk drivers will receive more compensation than their innocent injured victims?

Drunk drivers will be getting compensation in Bill 68 in instances where the victim will receive not a penny. That is true. A car thief, under Bill 68, could be treated better than his innocent injured victim. That is true too.

How can the member for Mississauga West write that those found to be criminally responsible for accidents will not receive income replacement benefits? How can he publish that and distribute that to the people of Mississauga West?

Mr Pelissero: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I listened carefully to the member for Welland-Thorold. The rules of

debate, 23(h), (i) and (j), state: "Makes allegations against another member." "Imputes false or unavowed motives to another member." "Charges another member with uttering a deliberate falsehood." I would ask you to review the statements made by the member with respect to the member for Mississauga West. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The member will be very careful.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, once again, I appreciate your guidance and the guidance of the member for—where was that member from? Lincoln. As I said before, some members make a bigger impression on you than others do. The member for Lincoln speaks up so rarely that I had to refer to you to find out who the heck that guy was.

In any event, he is a Liberal. I would have felt far better if the member for Lincoln had stood up and said, "I want to represent my constituents more than I want to represent the insurance industry"; if the member for Lincoln had stood up and said, "Because of that I am opposed to this time allocation motion, and I want to let you know right now that I am going to vote against it"; if the member for Lincoln had stood up and said: "I am not prepared to sell out little people, working people, seniors, young people, farmworkers. I am not prepared to sell them out for the sake of big profits for big, wealthy, powerful insurance companies." If he had stood up and said, "Because of that, notwithstanding that my House leader moves time allocation motions, I am going to oppose Bill 68," I would have felt a whole lot better.

His constituents would have felt even better about it than I would, because they are the people who are going to suffer as a result of, one, the Liberal support of this time allocation motion, and two, this Liberal support for Bill 68. Members heard what Mr Justice Haines called it, did they not, when I read a comment from Mr Justice Haines's letter to the government?

Mr Justice Haines said that the impression the passage of this legislation is going to create is that the government has sold out the little people, has forsaken the people of Ontario in exchange for big profits for the auto insurance industry, an auto insurance industry that, as we said before, was doing quite fine, thank you.

Mr Philip: Sounds like something Albert Roy said.

Mr Kormos: It was interesting. Again, that is one of the reasons why this time allocation motion is so grossly unacceptable. This time allocation motion must have been conjured up in the most oppressive of minds. One could not even begin to think of the attitude that had to pre-exist the creation of this time allocation motion; the mindset, the perspective, the disregard for fellow humankind that would have generated the preparation of this kind of time allocation motion.

We spent one day, merely one day, in Ottawa hearing opposition. No wonder the Liberals did not want to spend more than one day because it was opposition, opponent, opposition, opponent, opponent, opponent of Bill 68, one after the other after the other after the other. The Liberals were hard pressed to come up with people supporting this legislation, and Lord knows they tried. The Liberals lifted every rock they came across looking for somebody to support Bill 68. They did their very best.

One actor showed up in four different cities under four different guises—the parliamentary assistant, the Liberal member for Guelph, was there—one person showing up under four different guises, four different cities, four different times, because the Liberals were scrambling to find people to support this legislation.

We spent that one brief day in Ottawa, and that is all the Liberals would allow us. The Liberals did not want to spend any more time there because they knew that if they spent more time, there would simply be more opposition articulated to the bill. The member for Etobicoke-Rexdale from the New Democratic Party who was with me was able to greet his old friend, Mr Roy, who used to be a Liberal member sitting right here in this Legislature. Now Mr Roy—I addressed him as Mr Roy because I did not know him well enough to refer to him by his first name, but the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale referred to him by his first name and said, “Good to see you,” and I said, “Good to see you, Mr Roy.” Mr Roy said he is still a Liberal, but he came to tell the Liberals on that general government committee how bad Bill 68 was.

Enough of the lawyers. Look, do not worry about the lawyers. The lawyers are going to make money one way or another. It is a trait they have that cannot be suppressed. But please, worry about taxpayers. Worry about taxpayers who are going to have their pockets picked to the tune of \$141 million, perhaps as much as \$143 million in the first year alone; tax moneys are going to subsidize an already profitable auto insurance industry. Think about them for a few moments.

Think about the drivers in Ontario who are paying auto insurance premiums that are higher than they have ever been in the history of this province and who are being promised premium increases by as much as 50 per cent. Think about

them. Think about the innocent injured victims who will receive not a penny, in the case of 95 per cent of them, not a penny of compensation for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life.

I am shocked, Mr Speaker, as I know you are and other members of this Legislature are, by the types of comments contained in the householder distributed by the member for Mississauga West. It is very specifically because of that that it is so important to have a full debate here in the Legislature about Bill 68. One is concerned about how accurate some of the information that has been spread around is.

Surely the opposition is obligated to confront half-truths and possible mistruths. Surely the opposition is obligated to set the record straight when the record has been so seriously distorted. Surely the opposition is obligated to ask the Minister of Financial Institutions or the Liberal member for Guelph, his parliamentary assistant, “How could you let the member for Mississauga West make these kinds of statements in a householder that he has distributed across Mississauga?”

Mr Speaker, in view of the time and notwithstanding that I am mid-thought—I know I will be able to finish it tomorrow—I would move adjournment of the debate.

On motion by Mr Kormos, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1801.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

| | |
|--|---|
| Adams, Peter (Peterborough L) | Grandmaître, Bernard C. (Ottawa East L) |
| Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP) | Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP) |
| Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L) | Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L) |
| Beer, Hon Charles , Minister of Community and Social Services (York North L) | Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP) |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. , Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L) | Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC) |
| Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L) | Hart, Hon Christine E. , Minister of Culture and Communications (York East L) |
| Bradley, Hon James J. , Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L) | Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L) |
| Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC) | Hošek, Chaviva (Oakwood L) |
| Breaugh, Michael J., First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House (Oshawa NDP) | Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC) |
| Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L) | Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC) |
| Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP) | Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP) |
| Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L) | Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L) |
| Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L) | Kerrio, Vincent G. (Niagara Falls L) |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor , Minister of Health (Oriole L) | Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L) |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L) | Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP) |
| Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP) | Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L) |
| Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L) | Kwinter, Hon Monte , Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L) |
| Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L) | Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP) |
| Collins, Hon Shirley , Minister without Portfolio (Wentworth East L) | LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L) |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. , Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development (Renfrew North L) | Leone, Laureano (Downsview L) |
| Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L) | Lipsett, Ron (Grey L) |
| Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP) | Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L) |
| Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L) | MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L) |
| Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC) | Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP) |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC) | Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L) |
| Cureatz, Sam L., Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House (Durham East PC) | Mancini, Hon Remo , Minister of Revenue (Essex South L) |
| Curling, Alvin (Scarborough North L) | Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC) |
| Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L) | Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP) |
| Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L) | Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L) |
| Eakins, John F. (Victoria-Haliburton L) | McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC) |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. , Speaker (Perth L) | McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L) |
| Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L) | McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L) |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. , Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L) | McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC) |
| Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L) | McLeod, Hon Lyn , Minister of Energy and Minister of Natural Resources (Fort William L) |
| Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC) | Miclash, Frank (Kenora L) |
| Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP) | Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L) |
| Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L) | Morin, Hon Gilles E. , Minister without Portfolio (Carleton East L) |
| Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L) | Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste Marie NDP) |
| Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L) | Neumann, David E. (Brantford L) |
| Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L) | Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L) |
| Fontaine, Hon René , Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L) | Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L) |
| Fulton, Ed (Scarborough East L) | Nixon, Hon Robert F. , Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L) |
| Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L) | Oddie Munro, Lily (Hamilton Centre L) |
| | Offer, Hon Steven , Solicitor General (Mississauga North L) |
| | O'Neil, Hon Hugh P. , Minister of Mines (Quinte L) |
| | O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L) |
| | Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L) |

Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Correctional Services
(Ottawa Centre L)

Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)

Peterson, Hon David R., Premier and President of the Council
and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
(London Centre L)

Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)

Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Labour
(Scarborough-Agincourt L)

Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of
the Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)

Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)

Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)

Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)

Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)

Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)

Rae, Bob (York South NDP)

Ramsay, Hon David, Minister of Agriculture and Food
(Timiskaming L)

Ray, Michael C. (Windsor-Walkerville L)

Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)

Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Riddell, Jack (Huron L)

Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)

Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)

Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)

Scott, Hon Ian G., Attorney General (St George-St David L)

Smith, David W. (Lambton L)

Smith, E. Joan (London South L)

Sola, John (Mississauga East L)

Sorbara, Hon Gregory S., Minister of Consumer and
Commercial Relations (York Centre L)

South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)

Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)

Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)

Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)

Sweeney, Hon John, Minister of Housing and Minister of
Municipal Affairs (Kitchener-Wilmot L)

Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)

Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Ward, Hon Christopher C., Minister of Government Services
(Wentworth North L)

Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)

Wilson, Hon Mavis, Minister without Portfolio
(Dufferin-Peel L)

Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

Wong, Hon Robert C., Minister of Citizenship (Fort York L)

Wrye, Hon William, Minister of Transportation
(Windsor-Sandwich L)

Vacant, Ottawa South

*Lists of members of the executive council, parliamentary
assistants and members of committees are published in
Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the
first sitting day of each month.*

CONTENTS

Tuesday 17 April 1990

Members' statements

| | |
|--|------|
| Funding of international events | .584 |
| Miss Martel | |
| Cancer treatment | .585 |
| Mr Eves | |
| Barrie regional airport | .585 |
| Mr Owen | |
| Seaton community development | .585 |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | |
| Health cards | .585 |
| Mr Sterling | |
| Flame of Hope | .585 |
| Mr Reycraft | |
| Hospital beds | .586 |
| Mr Kormos | |
| Emergency telephone service | .586 |
| Mr McCague | |
| Drug abuse | .586 |
| Mr Adams | |

Statements by the ministry

| | |
|--|------|
| Community Justice Week | .586 |
| Mr Scott | |
| Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms | .587 |
| Mrs Wilson | |

Responses

| | |
|--|------|
| Community Justice Week | .587 |
| Mr Kormos | |
| Mr Reville | |
| Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms | .588 |
| Mr R. F. Johnston | |
| Community Justice Week | .588 |
| Mr Sterling | |
| Mr Brandt | |

Oral questions

| | |
|--|------|
| Business of the House | .588 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mr Ward | |
| Temagami district resources | .589 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mrs McLeod | |
| Transfer payments to municipalities | .590 |
| Mr Brandt | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Business of the House | .591 |
| Mr Sterling | |
| Mr Ward | |
| Mr Eves | |

| | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Goods and services tax | .592 |
| Mr Laughren | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Tourism | .592 |
| Mr McLean | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Mr Villeneuve | |
| Niagara Escarpment | .593 |
| Mr Elliot | |
| Mr Peterson | |
| Rent regulation | .594 |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | |
| Mr Sweeney | |
| Recycling | .594 |
| Mr Sterling | |
| Mr Bradley | |
| Hazardous spills | .594 |
| Miss Roberts | |
| Mr Bradley | |
| Pay equity | .595 |
| Mr Hampton | |
| Mr Phillips | |
| Retail store hours | .595 |
| Mr Cousens | |
| Mr Offer | |

Motion

| | |
|---|------|
| Private members' public business | .596 |
| Mr Ward | |
| Agreed to | .596 |

Petitions

| | |
|---|------|
| Ministry of Agriculture and Food | .596 |
| Mr Villeneuve | |
| French-language services | .596 |
| Mr Kozyra | |
| Environmental protection | .596 |
| Mr Kozyra | |

First reading

| | |
|---|------|
| Victoria County Railway Company Limited Act, 1990, Bill Pr63 | .597 |
| Mr Eakins | |
| Agreed to | .597 |

Second readings

| | |
|--|------|
| National Capital Children's Oncology Care Inc Act, 1990, Bill Pr8 | .597 |
| Mr Sterling | |
| Agreed to | .597 |

| | | | |
|---|-----|--|-----|
| The P & P Murray Foundation Act, 1990, Bill Pr36 . . . | 597 | Royal Canadian Legion Act, 1990, Bill Pr44 | 597 |
| Ms Poole | | Mrs Sullivan | |
| Agreed to | 597 | Agreed to | 597 |
| Immanuel Christian School Society of East Toronto Act, 1990, Bill Pr40 | 597 | Lake of the Woods District Hospital Act, 1989, Bill Pr47 | 597 |
| Mr Curling | | Mr Miclash | |
| Agreed to | 597 | Agreed to | 597 |
| Royal Canadian Legion Act, 1990, Bill Pr44 | 597 | 393598 Ontario Limited Act, 1989, Bill Pr49 | 597 |
| Mrs Sullivan | | Mrs O'Neill | |
| Agreed to | 597 | Agreed to | 597 |
| Lake of the Woods District Hospital Act, 1989, Bill Pr47 | 597 | Association of Stoney Lake Cottagers Inc Act, 1990, Bill Pr55 | 597 |
| Mr Miclash | | Mr Adams | |
| Agreed to | 597 | Agreed to | 597 |
| 393598 Ontario Limited Act, 1989, Bill Pr49 | 597 | City of North Bay Act, 1990, Bill Pr57 | 597 |
| Mrs O'Neill | | Mr Harris | |
| Agreed to | 597 | Agreed to | 597 |
| Association of Stoney Lake Cottagers Inc Act, 1990, Bill Pr55 | 597 | Gursikh Sabha Canada Act, 1990, Bill Pr58 | 597 |
| Mr Adams | | Mr Curling | |
| Agreed to | 597 | Agreed to | 597 |
| City of North Bay Act, 1990, Bill Pr57 | 597 | City of Chatham Foundation Act, 1990, Bill Pr61 | 597 |
| Mr Harris | | Mr Bossy | |
| Agreed to | 597 | Agreed to | 597 |
| Gursikh Sabha Canada Act, 1990, Bill Pr58 | 597 | City of Toronto Act, 1990, Bill Pr62 | 597 |
| Mr Curling | | Mr Kanter | |
| Agreed to | 597 | Agreed to | 597 |
| City of Chatham Foundation Act, 1990, Bill Pr61 | 597 | | |
| Mr Bossy | | | |
| Agreed to | 597 | | |
| City of Toronto Act, 1990, Bill Pr62 | 597 | | |
| Mr Kanter | | | |
| Agreed to | 597 | | |

Third readings

| | |
|---|-----|
| National Capital Children's Oncology Care Inc Act, 1990, Bill Pr8 | 597 |
| Mr Sterling | |
| Agreed to | 597 |
| The P & P Murray Foundation Act, 1990, Bill Pr36 . . . | 597 |
| Ms Poole | |
| Agreed to | 597 |
| Immanuel Christian School Society of East Toronto Act, 1990, Bill Pr40 | 597 |
| Mr Curling | |
| Agreed to | 597 |

Government motion

| | |
|---|-----|
| Time allocation, motion 30 | 597 |
| Mr Kormos | |
| Adjourned | 606 |

Other business

| | |
|---|-----|
| Legislative pages | 583 |
| The Speaker | |
| Business of the House | 583 |
| The Speaker | |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | |
| Mr Eves | |
| Mr Ward | |
| Adjournment | 606 |
| Alphabetical list of members | 607 |



18 90

18 90

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 18 April 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le mercredi 18 avril 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Languages in Hansard

Hansard reports all debates in English or French as spoken by the participants. It does not translate remarks made in either language. Headings and tables of contents reflect language use.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 18 April 1990

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TIMBER MANAGEMENT

Mr Hampton: For almost two years now, environmental assessment hearings to assess the timber management program of this government's Ministry of Natural Resources have been held in Thunder Bay. These hearings are supposed to look at the crucial issues of the future use and care of the crown land forests, which make up about 40 per cent of the province.

Those of us who watch the hearings, however, have become convinced that the hearings are really being held so that this government can hide its irresponsible forest policies under mountains of gobbledegook and paper. The government does not want the information that is there to get out to the public, but some of the news is getting out.

At the hearings this government has been forced to reveal its position on clear-cutting of the forest. Ministry of Natural Resources officials have stated that clear-cutting is "appropriate and sensible." One government spokesman at the hearings said that in Ontario a clear-cut of 5,000 to 10,000 acres is an acceptably large clear-cut, but on 16 August 1988 the government admitted there have been single clear-cuts in Ontario as large as 50,000 acres in size.

Contrast the Ontario government's policy with the US Forest Service policy in the national forests, which are roughly equivalent to our crown forests. There the maximum single clear-cut is 100 acres—100 acres compared to 50,000 acres.

FIBRE OPTIC CABLE

Mr Pollock: Bell Canada is in the process of installing a fibre optic cable from Toronto to Ottawa to Montreal. This cable runs the full length of my riding, travelling across a large part of Peterborough county and across Hastings county. The cost of installing this cable is approximately \$9 million in my riding alone.

This has provided employment for local contractors, and it has been a hard fight to cope with the swamps, the stones, the bush country and the bedrock. These contractors are to be commended because of the job that they have done in all kinds of adverse weather conditions.

The most impressive part of this process is the fibre optic cable, which has 18 fibres with six additional fibres for local service. This cable will have an initial capacity of 72,000 simultaneous conversations. This fibre optic cable is an amazing engineering accomplishment. Gone are the days when you clamp copper wire together. You now repair the fibre optic cable with a microscope and laser beam.

The fibre optic cable is manufactured in Saskatoon by Northern Telecom. I would like to pay tribute to all employees of Bell Canada and Bell Canada itself for their efforts. They provide good service for the province of Ontario.

ANNIVERSARY OF VIMY RIDGE

Mr Tatham: Flying from Toronto to Quebec City on 10 April, it was foggy in Toronto. The captain reports light snow in Quebec.

Je me souviens—ut incepit fidelis sic permanet.

On Easter Monday 73 years ago, 9 April 1917, the Canadians took Vimy Ridge. Now we are a nation.

The Morning Post: "Canadians Sweep Vimy Ridge." The New York Tribune, in an editorial: "Well Done Canada."

The British had not done it; the French had not done it; the Canadians did it.

From sea to sea—a mari usque ad mare.

Remember Vimy.

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Miss Martel: On 21 March the Ministry of Skills Development received a formal request to provide trade-related training to ironworker apprentices at Cambrian College. This important initiative was undertaken by Doug Rollins of Local 786 of the Iron Workers union in Sudbury. If accepted, the request would mean that northern apprentices could remain in the north to complete their formal educational training.

At present, ironworker training is offered at George Brown College in Toronto. The Ministry of Skills Development purchases seats and offers these to apprentices being trained by various ironworker unions. The north receives only a small portion of these seats. For example, while 20 seats were purchased for January and February of 1990, only five of these went to northern applicants.

The second problem concerns cost. Most of the apprentices will be sponsored by the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission for the duration of the course. They will also qualify for an allowance of \$75 a week from Manpower to cover out-of-town expenses. However, it is now taking some six to seven weeks to process the first cheque, and it is also impossible to find accommodation and pay for food in Toronto on \$75 a week. Northern apprentices are discouraged from even applying for a position at George Brown, because they cannot afford to support themselves and their families in the north during the training period.

The Ministry of Skills Development should open up ironworker training at Cambrian College. Northern apprentices can then remain and be trained in the north.

INMATES' MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Cureatz: I want to make an apology to the honourable Minister of Correctional Services. I had attributed to him a statement that, when he was in Sault Ste Marie, he had referred to psychiatric inmates in institutions as crazy people. He has assured me that was not the case. The article written in the Sault certainly would allude to the fact that he said that. He has assured me that was not said. I appreciate his informing me and I apologize to the minister, as difficult as that is for me to do from time to time.

1340

ELECTRICITY DEMAND AND SUPPLY

Mr Cureatz: When Ontario Hydro unveiled its demand/supply plan last December, both the Premier and the Minister of Energy refused to take a position. Instead, they said they had a process in place to determine whether or not we actually need a new source of energy. The environmental assessment of the DSP, they said, would tell us "all." The Liberal government led us to believe nothing would happen for the next three years until the Environmental Assessment Board had thoroughly scrutinized Ontario Hydro's plan to make sure it is the best alternative available. In the meantime, Ontario Hydro said it would meet our energy needs by pursuing demand management initiatives.

However, we have seen that Ontario Hydro is proceeding with the DSP bit by bit. First, we had the announcement of the purchase of power from Manitoba; then Ontario Hydro's testing of a number of combustion turbines to boost power at fossil fuel plants; now we have Ontario Hydro going ahead with a separate environmental assessment of a new hydraulic station at Little Jackfish River; and of course recently the Liberal Party indicated its support of nuclear power. It behooves me to tell everyone in Ontario that we have no leadership in terms of energy production in Ontario.

DISPOSABLE DIAPERS

Mr Adams: During the last session I spoke twice on the matter of so-called disposable diapers. I pointed out that these diapers are not disposable; being plastic, they do not degrade and their contents are a potential hazard in landfill sites.

I would like to report on some progress in this important matter. The city of Peterborough and others took a firm stand against these diapers at the annual Association of Municipalities of Ontario meeting. In Peterborough, the number of parents who have happily disposed of the disposable diaper habit is steadily increasing. Those who have done so are saving both money and the environment.

We have 200 infants who use the cotton diapers of one small reusable diaper company. As each child uses 7,000 diapers from birth to toilet training, these 200 cotton diaper users represent a total of 7,000 times 200 diapers which would otherwise have ended up in landfills. This is no less than 1.4 million diapers which will not be polluting our environment. And this is but one of several companies in Peterborough in this growing business. Between them they replace many millions of disposable diapers each year.

If this one community is doing this, how much more is being done across the province of Ontario?

FOREST FIREFIGHTING

Mr Wildman: I note that yesterday the Minister of Natural Resources indicated that she was accepting the 10-person task force report on forest firefighting. This is a task force made up of Ministry of Natural Resources management and members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.

Members will recall that the staff of the Ministry of Natural Resources had argued vehemently against the cuts that the ministry had made in the total number of forest firefighters in Ontario; specifically, the cuts from five-man to three-man crews. It is interesting to note that in the recommendations in this study it is determined that often at least four people are needed on a crew rather than three, particularly in the northwest.

I am concerned, though, about the recommendation that the ministry look for other sources of funding for forest firefighting. What does this mean? Is the ministry going to look at privatizing forest firefighting in Ontario or transferring the costs to the municipal fire departments where they are available? In each case, that would be unacceptable. The ministry does not provide any funding to the municipalities now for structural firefighting. It would be completely inappropriate to saddle them with the cost of forest firefighting. I hope that the minister will make clear exactly what her acceptance of that recommendation means.

AGRICULTURAL FUNDING

Mr Villeneuve: Ontario's farmers have been not only neglected but totally forgotten now for more than two years by this government. Farmers want to see some positive steps taken in next week's budget, not another cutback. Farmers need restoration of the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program and the soil conservation program. Farmers need a farm tax reduction program that makes sense and is equitable and which is not simply an election gimmick which will disappear in one or two years. Farmers need a capital grants program oriented towards the environmental programs that they must put into place.

They also want to know what this government is going to do to make sure that Ontario gets its fair share of Ottawa's recently announced \$500-million farm aid program. The existence of the federal program has been public for some time. The major condition is that funding be cost-shared with the provinces. What Ontario farmers do not know is what this government and what this minister are doing to make sure Ontario is not left out.

Ontario's farm cash receipts are projected to be down again this year, Ontario's net farm cash income is projected to be down again this year, Ontario's realized net farm income is projected to be down again this year and Ontario's total net farm income is projected to be down again this year. What other industry has that kind of negative reaction? This government has done nothing. It is about time that the minister and this government looked at their own figures and did something positive for Ontario agriculture.

THOMAS HENNESSY

Mr Campbell: I wish to pay special tribute today to the late Thomas Hennessy of Sudbury, who passed away earlier this month.

Spike, as he was called, had a varied career of public service in which he was always unselfishly committed to the Sudbury community. He served as Sudbury city engineer for 17 years, from 1953 to 1970. From 1974 to 1979, Mr Hennessy was vice-president, administration, at Laurentian University.

Mr Hennessy is perhaps best remembered for his many years as general manager of the Sudbury Regional Development Corp. During this time he was responsible for overseeing and directing economic diversification initiatives in the regional municipality of Sudbury. In this major and ongoing endeavour, Mr Hennessy worked very closely with contacts around the world, community leaders, staff and members of regional council as we built a strong future for Sudbury.

As a former regional councillor, I was privileged to work with him. I valued his expertise and insight and was impressed by his commitment and dedication to the people of the area.

Mr Hennessy was recognized for his many contributions to the life of Sudbury in 1984, when he became a member of the Order of Canada.

In this House, many members speak about distinguished individuals in their communities. Thomas "Spike" Hennessy was such a man.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

VITAL STATISTICS REGISTRATION

ENREGISTREMENT DES STATISTIQUES DE L'ÉTAT CIVIL

Hon Mr Sorbara: Later today I will be introducing for first reading the Change of Name Amendment Act, 1990, as well as the Vital Statistics Amendment Act, 1990.

The purpose of the Change of Name Amendment Act is to eliminate a section currently in the law which requires that if a person chooses to change his or her name as a result of marriage, that person's birth registration documents must also be changed to reflect the new name.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of my colleague the member for High Park-Swansea, who in June 1988 moved to amend the legislation with private member's Bill 164. Today's amendments were greatly influenced by his concerns for the objections of many Ontario women to the provisions of the existing law.

Les amendements d'aujourd'hui ont été fortement influencés par les préoccupations du député de High Park-Swansea vis-à-vis des objections de nombreuses femmes de l'Ontario à l'égard des dispositions de la loi actuelle.

By amending the act, we hope to correct a situation that primarily affected women. Under the election provision of the amended act, Ontario women who decide to take their husband's name upon marriage will no longer be required to change the name on their birth registration. The traditional practice of assuming the husband's name through regular usage has always been in place and remains so. However, if a person decides to make a formal name change under this section, the birth certificate will not be altered.

Changes to the Vital Statistics Act are of a more technical nature, affecting the way registrations of births, marriages and deaths are collected and stored. They lay the groundwork for the implementation of new computer technology that will allow the office of the registrar general to operate out of a new head office in Thunder Bay and a walk-in centre located in Toronto.

Auto imaging will allow rapid transmission of documents and information and improve security safeguards. In addition, it will store records in machine-readable form.

L'auto-prise d'images permettra la transmission rapide des documents et des informations, l'amélioration des dispositifs de sécurité et la conservation des registres sous une forme compréhensible par une machine.

The amendments will also permit many of the office's historical documents to be transferred to the Archives of Ontario, where services can be provided to historians and genealogists. This is actually good news for the thousands of people tracing family histories in Ontario every year. The essential records of our heritage as families and as a society will be significantly more accessible as a result of these amendments.

The amendments will also help the office of the registrar general to provide greater and more efficient services to the people of Ontario. I urge that all members support them when I introduce them for first reading later today.

1350

NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP WEEK

Hon Mr Wong: I rise on the occasion of National Citizenship Week, which is being celebrated throughout Canada this week. April 17 is the anniversary of the proclamation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, so National Citizenship Week serves as a reminder that we all have a duty to play our part in safeguarding the rights of all who call Canada home.

This province's reputation for fairness and justice has made Ontario the home of choice for more new Canadians than any other province. I am proud that Ontario is a place in which people of very many different backgrounds, languages, races and cultures can feel at home.

This week is also a time for us to be reminded of Canada's place in world affairs. We are aware that many other countries look to Canada for a positive example of a fair, just and harmonious society. Although we are often inclined to take these very Canadian qualities for granted, National Citizenship Week is an occasion to remember and appreciate them.

Forty years ago Canada adopted its first Citizenship Act. The current Canadian Citizenship Act came into force this week in 1977. The principal objectives of the 1977 act are to eliminate discrimination among applicants for Canadian citizenship based on age, sex, marital status or country of previous citizenship.

The flag that we now regard with pride and affection was the subject of an exceedingly long debate, one that the critics of the day denounced as impossible to resolve and divisive. Today we see our flag as a symbol of our abilities to reach a consensus and our adherence to deep common values, such as the ones we celebrate this week. This week provides an excellent opportunity for all of us to recognize the 40th anniversary of our first Citizenship Act.

RESPONSES

VITAL STATISTICS REGISTRATION

Mr R. F. Johnston: In response to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, I want to quote Mel Brooks from *Blazing Saddles*, "Work, work, work, work." My goodness, what the minister has produced here. It is good to see he is hard at it, because where would we have been?

When I first saw this on my desk, I thought, "Well, finally, the Change of Name Amendment Act; a number of Liberal backbenchers and ministers are going to change their names to numbered companies." But no, it was instead to protect women who have changed their names so that they will not have to change their birth registration documents as well. It is high time it has been done. I know the member for High-Park Swansea is delighted to see his work come to full fruition here today with this announcement.

To put this in some context, though, a number of years ago a mildly more progressive government in a province just next to ours actually changed the onus in its legislation around names. Women who wanted to change their names after marriage would have to register and go through a process to do so, rather than the presumption that was in the law at that time, that women would change their names after marriage. I find it strange that this is the best the province of Ontario can do today.

The other matter is of exceeding importance to all those who feel that searching their families' histories would prove worth while and not embarrassing, which should eliminate most

of the members opposite, but I think the rapid transmission of genealogical data is something we could not have waited another day for.

NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP WEEK

Mr B. Rae: I want to join with the members of the House in celebrating National Citizenship Week and join with the minister in celebrating the extraordinary fact of Canadian life. On this occasion, as we approach the last couple of months leading up to the deadline for Meech Lake, let us all hope that we will have many more national citizenship weeks in the future to celebrate.

Mr Brandt: I too want to join in the celebration of National Citizenship Week and compliment the minister in joining with the federal government with respect to the recognition of some of our citizens who have come to Ontario and Canada from other countries.

As the minister well knows, my own family came from another country. I am a first-generation Canadian and although I was born here in Ontario, I do respect very deeply, as I know the minister does, those who have come from other parts of the world to join in with us in building a better Ontario and a better Canada.

The realities in this province, as I am sure the minister is aware, are that some 50 per cent of all immigrants from other countries come to Ontario and virtually half of that 50 per cent locates in the greater Metropolitan Toronto area.

We have attempted over the years, and I say this in a non-partisan way, with all political parties to welcome with open arms these citizens as contributing members of our society, to make Ontario the kind of place where people could contribute in a very positive way and feel that their rights as individuals were well protected. We have tried to develop legislation and laws that are sensible and that are sensitive to the needs of people from various parts of the world.

I think that during the course of the celebrations of this week, we have much to be thankful for. Ontario has provided a home for many people from various countries, but it has also provided an opportunity for those people to be real Canadians in every sense of the word. I join with the government, on one of the few occasions that I can agree entirely with what the government is doing, and say that we should all join together and make this a better province and a better country by strengthening our programs, our legislation and our views towards those from other countries who have made this their home.

ORAL QUESTIONS

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr B. Rae: The publication in today's Toronto Star of a letter from the Deputy Minister of Northern Affairs to the Premier's own deputy minister is a reminder of just how serious the job situation in northern Ontario has become with the closure of many mines across the north and the closure in Elliot Lake.

The Speaker: The question is to whom?

Mr B. Rae: My question is to the Premier. We know, for example, according to the government's own figures, that the mining profits tax generates some \$150 million and that stumpage fees and other fees generate at least \$85 million and possibly even more, and yet the government's own funds in the

northern Ontario heritage fund and the northern development fund are worth at most \$50 million.

I want to ask the Premier why it would be that every year in the north far more money is being taken out, both in terms of stumpage fees and resource taxes, whether it is in the forest industry or whether it is in mining, than is being put back in to deal with the extraordinary changes that are taking place across northern Ontario.

Hon Mr Peterson: My honourable friend may have a mathematical calculation on this that no one else has. If he has some figures on that, then he should lay them before this House, but he knows what he has said just does not represent the reality by any stretch of the imagination; he knows that and I am surprised, frankly, that he would put it in that context.

The member knows of the support for roads. Obviously there are special programs: the northern development program, the northern heritage program and a variety of others. He knows of the special programs that are going in to support municipal infrastructure. He knows the things that have gone into hospital care and a variety of other programs. The member knows the government jobs that are going to northern Ontario, where we are trying to assist in making the economy less cyclical, which it is and there is no question about that.

I think that if my honourable friend wanted to present the reality of the situation, he would want to present all the facts at the same time.

1400

Mr B. Rae: The fact remains that if you look at the extent of the problem and if you look at what the government is doing in terms of change and in terms of job loss—let's take mining as an example—surely the Premier would agree that the money that comes out in terms of mining profits comes out over a period of time, yet if you look at the assistance that is being provided to a community like Elliot Lake, it does not begin to meet the need and certainly does not begin to address the size of the problem affecting that community.

My question to the Premier is this: Why would his northern heritage fund and his northern development fund not be equal at least to the amount of money he is extracting from the northern economy in terms of stumpage fees, the mining profits tax and the export tax on softwood lumber? Why would the money he is putting back into those specific areas not be equal at least to the money he is taking out?

Hon Mr Peterson: If you were looking at a calculation of taxes from northern Ontario, you would look at corporate tax, personal tax and retail sales tax—you would look at all of that—and then you would look at the moneys going back in from a whole variety of programs, be they medical programs—

Mr Wildman: More comes out than goes back.

Hon Mr Peterson: I understand my honourable friend is shouting that more comes out than goes back. He has never presented any evidence to that effect. If he has a calculation, it would be very interesting to hear it, but I think my honourable friend would want to balance those things out.

I do not think there is a government, and I think many of my friends from the north will tell him this, that has ever been more sensitive to some of these particular problems in northern Ontario. We are sensitive to them. We have moved a vast number of jobs there. We are trying to assist in a variety of ways: roadbuilding programs and special programs for northern Ontario.

Now there are special problems in special areas. We know that. The member is someone who stands up and says, "Don't log anything in Temagami." He is the author of some of the problems there. So he cannot have it both ways. I think if he is going to present a balanced case, then he would want to present both sides of this case.

Mr B. Rae: I do not think the Premier can be taken seriously if he thinks the government of Ontario is putting back into the northern economy in terms of diversifying it, in terms of providing stability—not short-term, cut-and-run options, which is the Liberal option for Ontario just as it was the Tory option for 42 years, but an option that provides stable jobs, renewable jobs, jobs that are going to be here tomorrow, next year, five years and 10 years down the line. Those are the kinds of job northerners want.

Specifically can the Premier deny the fact that more money is being taken out by the mining profits tax, that more money is being taken out in stumpage fees, that more money is being taken out in terms of the softwood lumber tax? If we put them all together, the government is taking a whole lot more out than it is putting into the northern development fund or the northern heritage fund. The Premier cannot deny that.

Hon Mr Peterson: I did not deny that. What I am saying to the Leader of the Opposition is that he is taking a completely superficial, political approach when he wants it both ways. On the one hand he says, "You can't do anything up there, you can't log or mine," and on the other hand he says—this government has done more for northern Ontario. He should look at the jobs that have gone in: 1,600 jobs in northern Ontario with a payroll of some \$50 million to \$55 million per year. We have moved to stabilize this in ways the member has not even thought of. So when my honourable friend presents a superficial case for whatever is his perception of short-term political events, let me tell him that he defies his own credibility.

The Speaker: New question, the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore.

Mrs Grier: My question is for the Minister of the Environment. I would like permission to stand it down until he comes. We understand he is going to.

The Speaker: I presume there is agreement by members of the House. Agreed.

ST JOSEPH'S TRAINING SCHOOL FOR BOYS

Mr Brandt: My question is to the Premier with respect to the matter we raised last week about the alleged abuse that was going on some years ago at St Joseph's Training School for Boys in Alfred. This series of stories is expanding rather rapidly as others come forward to indicate that they were occupants of that particular home during a time when these situations of abuse occurred, some of them with connotations that are extremely distasteful.

I wonder whether the Premier and his cabinet have come to a decision as to whether or not an inquiry is in order and in fact will be undertaken by the government as it relates to the St Joseph's situation.

Hon Mr Peterson: My honourable friend raised the question last week and I can tell him that it has been the subject of a great deal of discussion among my colleagues. I share the honourable member's concerns, as does the government, on these events that took place some years ago. The question is, are they limited to that institution or are there others as well? That is a legitimate question that has to be addressed. Indeed,

one has to put that in the context of our entire system for care for young people today and whether we can comfortably give the assurances to parents that we are doing everything we can possibly do to prevent this kind of problem.

As my honourable friend is aware, the ministers met with Mr McCann last week, and I met with Mr McCann last week, and we have responded immediately with counselling and to assist in any way we possibly can. The police investigation has been substantially upgraded, the Solicitor General tells me, to look into all the suggestions and allegations of abuse at this time. Obviously we do not rule any inquiry out at the end of the day, but at the present time the approach is to investigate this with vigour.

Mr Brandt: I appreciate the response of the Premier, and it was far more positive than I had hoped for in some respects. There are other institutions in addition to St Joseph's where there are alleged problems.

During the course of the Premier's discussions with respect to a possible inquiry, I wonder if he would also look at situations like that concerning a lady by the name of Christina Boyland, who is a resident of Sudbury and for a period of time was in the St Thomas Psychiatric Hospital. I use the name, by the way, because it is a matter of public information and this case was written up and provided to me by a gentleman reporter from the Sudbury area. While she was a ward in that particular institution, there was a situation where there were reasons to believe there was alleged abuse as it related to this particular lady as well, in a psychiatric institution.

My question to the Premier is this: While he is considering an inquiry into the situation in Alfred, I wonder if he might expand his area of consideration to include other institutions like psychiatric facilities, nursing homes and homes for the aged where there are other situations where we have had situations of abuse brought to our attention.

Hon Mr Peterson: I appreciate the honourable member's suggestion and in conjunction with the ministers, I obviously will take any advice he has on this matter very, very seriously.

As my honourable friend knows, it was just a month or so ago that these allegations of abuse some 25 years ago come to light. Reasonable people would ask, "Now, how could it happen that we are hearing of these things 25 years after the fact?" We are looking at all the aspects of that and other allegations and suggestions that have come forward in the last little while. I can tell my honourable friend that we will take all of his suggestions under advisement to make sure that to the fullest extent of our ability these kinds of situations of abuse are not taking place today.

Mr Brandt: What concerns me is that we do have allegations of abuse that are emanating out of the St Joseph's institute. We have others in psychiatric facilities. Recently I received a letter from the daughter of a lady, 81 years of age, who was abused in a particular nursing home, and as a result of the assault that occurred in that nursing home, I am sorry to say, that particular 81-year-old lady subsequently died. There is another situation where it occurred in a different type of facility, but where abuse is again a matter, I think, that should be of paramount concern to government.

I appeal to the Premier. Since we have a rather substantial number of these cases that are across a broad spectrum of areas of government concern, like psychiatric institutions, nursing homes, homes for the aged, homes for delinquent children and so forth, would the Premier consider expanding any terms of reference of a potential inquiry to look at all of these areas and

to make sure our citizens who are extremely vulnerable in these institutions are given proper care and protection?

Hon Mr Peterson: The honourable member mentions a number of specific questions, and I would hope that the member has reported those immediately to the OPP and to the special unit that is investigating those kinds of situations, because when there are allegations of criminality and abuse, they have to be tracked down. There is no question about that. I know my honourable friend would take seriously his responsibilities in that regard.

Obviously, whenever I hear of these situations of abuse in any institution or, for that matter, outside of an institution—my honourable friend will be aware that happens as well—we have to look at the kinds of laws that we have in this province to protect vulnerable people, be they young or old, institutionalized or non-institutionalized. Certainly we are trying to respond to this as sensitively and quickly as we possibly can, and to serve the public interest to make sure that all of our citizens are safe.

1410

The Speaker: I note that the Minister of the Environment has responded to the call from the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, so I will recognize the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore.

SOFT DRINK CONTAINERS

Mrs Grier: When this Minister of the Environment took office, 50 per cent of the soft drinks in the province were sold in reusable, refillable containers. One of his earliest acts was to cave in to the soft drink industry and agree that only 30 per cent of the soft drink sales had to be in reusable containers in exchange for industry participating in the blue box system. The number of charges laid and convictions obtained by his ministry in the interim indicates that industry was not living up to its part of the bargain.

We understand now that the Recycling Advisory Committee has made a recommendation to the minister that he make another deal with the soft drink industry and that he reinterpret the regulation. Can the minister confirm that he has agreed in principle that he will lay no further charges under this regulation because the industry has shown evidence that it is living up to both the letter and the spirit of its responsibilities?

Hon Mr Bradley: Indeed, I have received from the Recycling Advisory Committee of Ontario—which, as the member knows, includes representatives from municipalities, environment groups and the various components of the industry—a unanimous recommendation that the emphasis be shifted from actual sales to the availability to the consumer of refillables and non-refillables in terms of that ratio. The member would recognize that there was not a request that either the legislation or the regulation be modified, but they did make this recommendation based on the fact that the blue box program in Ontario has been exceedingly beneficial and successful. Indeed, some 1.8 million households in the province now are involved in the blue box program.

While others in other jurisdictions have tried different methods to divert waste from what would normally go to either a landfill or an incinerator, they are coming to Ontario to look at what we have done because we have been most successful in diverting that household waste, in that instead of the approximately one per cent which is contributed by soft drink

containers to the waste stream, we have, through the blue box program, the engine of which is the soft drink container—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mrs Grier: Before this minister took office, he believed in a waste reduction hierarchy of reducing, reusing and then recycling. In fact, representatives of all parties in this Legislature last December supported a motion of mine reaffirming their commitment to that hierarchy and calling upon the minister to reduce waste. If there is any easy way to reduce waste, it is to require people to use reusable soft drink containers. One study has shown that only 6.3 per cent of those that could be recycled are in fact recycled.

How on earth can the minister justify this latest cave-in to the industry and the fact that he is prepared to put all the responsibility on the consumers and not on the producers of the waste? I thought he also agreed in making the producers and the polluters pay. Now he is saying it is our fault because we are not buying reusable containers.

Hon Mr Bradley: Of course what the member forgets in this whole matter is that there will still be a requirement, for instance, in terms of advertising, that the soft drink industries must advertise equally both non-refillables and refillables; second, that they must continue to stock on their shelves both refillables and non-refillables so that they are available to the consumers.

She forgets as well that the pricing system will mean that on the average there will be a 30 per cent lower price for those drinks that are sold in refillables instead of non-refillables and that in fact they must maintain their production capabilities so that they can supply to the consumers of Ontario. She would know if consumers in the province, as they indicate in many areas, wish to purchase one product over another—for instance, 100 per cent of the products that are sold in terms of soft drinks could be in refillables rather than in non-refillables if that were the choice of the people. But she must recognize that the Recycling Advisory Committee obviously believes that the best way to capture the most waste and divert it from either landfill or incinerators is by using blue boxes.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mrs Grier: I think it is important that members of the House understand that what the minister is saying is: "We're not going to regulate. We're not going to monitor. We're not going to prosecute. It's the choice of the people." It is the choice of the people to gobble up prime farm land and live around Metropolitan Toronto. Is that why we have no food land policy guidelines in this province? It is the choice of the lumber mills to lumber old-growth forests. That is what the market might dictate. Is that why we are logging Temagami?

This minister is now saying it is the choice of the people to use non-refillable containers and therefore we will not regulate the industry. Does he not realize that this is a complete abdication of his responsibility to protect the environment and reduce waste?

Hon Mr Bradley: What the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore refuses to understand, or refuses to recognize at least, is the fact that we have in Ontario a system which in terms of household garbage diverts some 14 per cent of that which would normally go to an incinerator or to a landfill in the province and that in fact the engine for this, what is making it work, is indeed the soft drink container which is in that blue box.

Why, I ask the member, are people coming from all over North America to look at the system we have in effect, which has 1.8 million households and which has the broad support of people right across this province? Why are people from the European Community now coming to look at what we are doing in North America in terms of our blue box system and in terms of the Ontario Multi-Material Recycling Inc system, where the private sector has added, to the \$20 million that it already gave, \$45 million to promote recycling in this province and where we are going to see even more of that happening?

HOSPITAL BEDS

Mr Brandt: A question again to the Premier. Prior to the 1987 election there was a very substantial announcement made by his government to the effect that it would be investing some \$850 million in hospital beds and health services in Ontario and that would amount to some 4,400 beds. I realize that promise has been withdrawn or changed or altered very substantially.

There are people who are extremely angry that the government has led them up the garden path with respect to hospital construction. I say that because areas like Ajax-Pickering have raised \$7 million, their required one third of the money, and they have received absolutely no word from the government with respect to what has happened to what they considered to be a very firm promise.

These petitions the Premier sees before him, thousands of them, are from the Ajax-Pickering area saying, "Are you going to build the hospital you promised to build before the last election?" They would like to know from the Premier, is he going to keep the promise?

Hon Mr Peterson: Obviously we will keep the promise. I tell my honourable friend that all those commitments still stand and indeed are exceeded. Some discussions are going on in various communities on the appropriate kind of care for the future, working along with community-based care as well. I do not think the member has any reason to despair.

1420

Mr Brandt: I am glad the Premier does not think I have any reason to despair. I am feeling quite badly about the efforts that have been put forward on a local level by these individuals, who have literally raised millions of dollars, which was the formula the Premier and his ministry and staff put in place in order to proceed with the construction of these facilities. Now he has announced in the Ajax-Pickering area this new community called Seaton, which is going to require some additional infrastructure. The hospital that would be most likely to support the health needs of the people in this new community would be Ajax-Pickering.

Is the Premier prepared to make a commitment today that Ajax-Pickering will receive the money it requires to build the additional chronic care beds that it has requested and that he will meet the commitment that he made?

Hon Mr Peterson: There is no question that we will respond to the needs of that community and there is no question that we understand the needs of the new and expanding community of Seaton. We are determined to have the best infrastructure available for those people.

My honourable friend knows the discussions that are going on with a number of communities with respect to the very best kind of community and chronic care for the future. As he knows, there is also a new emphasis on home care, and community-based medicine. My honourable friend will know that

we in Ontario are, I think, the most institutionalized society in the world. There are new approaches being looked at, but every community will have its needs responded to.

Mr Brandt: The Premier says today that we are the most institutionalized province or region in the entire world, and I presume by that he means we have more available hospital beds per capita. There may be some truth in that.

I did not make the commitment for 4,400 beds in 1986; the Premier did. On the strength of that commitment, hospitals in Sarnia, in London, in Windsor, in Orillia, in Ajax-Pickering, in St Catharines, in areas right across this province have proceeded to have bake sales and bottle drives to solicit direct donations from individuals in order to support their part of the commitment. Now what is being said to them is that discussions are going on. They were of the opinion that those discussions had come to a bit of an end and had been concluded satisfactorily and that the commitment was made by the government to proceed with the construction.

What time frame can he give Ajax and Pickering General Hospital or St Catharines General Hospital or other hospitals that have raised money locally before they are going to get the money to proceed with the construction they require?

Hon Mr Peterson: I cannot respond to the specific question with respect to a specific hospital, but I am certainly happy to respond in general. That financial commitment stands and indeed has been exceeded. There is far more than that.

Mr Brandt: It has not been exceeded.

Hon Mr Peterson: I can tell my honourable friend that he is just getting excited about things that are not correct. We recognize the changes of demographics. We recognize the changing emphasis on home care. We recognize some of the changing community needs and we are very comfortable to respond to that in a very thoughtful way, not just for now but in the future as well. I can tell my honourable friend we are working with those communities, and I think they understand this approach.

MUNICIPAL FINANCES

Mr Laughren: I have a question for the Treasurer of Ontario. The Treasurer said yesterday that he believes taxpayers everywhere are sick and tired of having one level of government pass off its responsibilities to another level of government and make the taxpayers pay there. I happen to agree with the Treasurer in that regard. I know as well that the taxpayers in Brant county agree with the Treasurer, since last year they had a 14 per cent increase in property taxes and they are going to have one of around nine per cent this year, in 1990. Officials at Brant county tell us that the reason for that is strictly provincial government initiatives.

Could the Treasurer tell us, since he understands how taxpayers are sick and tired of this going on, why he continues to pass off costs to the municipalities, which can least support it?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am very much impressed with the abilities of the elected officials and financial officers in Brant county to improve their situation. I think the honourable member would join with me in extending congratulations to them. They are all good friends of mine. That does not necessarily mean they are all Liberals, but I assure the member none of them are New Democrats.

I think the honourable member would also be aware that on average, since 1985, we have increased the allocations to the municipalities by nine per cent per year. I know that the

municipalities have been doing their best to control their costs but, as these costs go above that, naturally they have to turn to their own ratepayers to find the funds that are required. We think they have done a reasonably good job at that. They feel we are not giving them enough money, and I can understand that feeling. I have been known to criticize the senior level of government for not giving us enough money, and I do not want to do that any more.

Mr Laughren: We will see next Tuesday how serious the Treasurer is about that. Perhaps we could turn to the city of Brantford rather than Brant county.

Mr Reville: There are some New Democrats there. I know that.

Mr Laughren: Yes, there are lots of New Democrats in the city of Brantford.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Laughren: The property taxpayers in the city of Brantford are having an increase this year on property taxes of 8.2 per cent, and the reason that it is 8.2 per cent—which is above the rate of inflation, I am sure the Treasurer knows—is the unconditional grants that were frozen for the last two years; the health payroll tax, which is costing an additional \$150,000; pay equity, \$300,000; court security, \$60,000, plus a wide array of other costs, primarily caused by this Treasurer.

The Treasurer knows that property taxes are unfair and hit low- and middle-income earners the hardest. Will he assure us that in his budget next Tuesday there will be no provincial initiatives that will pass on the costs of these initiatives to property taxpayers at the municipal level?

Hon R. F. Nixon: It is a fortunate coincidence, I suppose, that the tax increase the honourable member reports from Brantford is identical to the increase we are passing on from the provincial Treasury on the overall basis: 8.2 per cent. It is almost magical. This of course does not mean the local taxpayers are not going to have to dig deeper, not only for the programs that are required on a general basis across the province but for those that are designed specially to benefit the city of Brantford.

We think Brantford is a case that is particularly appropriate to choose because it is one of the progressive municipalities in Ontario. They have been able to control and direct their growth in an exceptionally fine way. My colleague the honourable member for Brantford was really the author of setting that city in this direction and towards these goals, for which the local ratepayers have shown their appreciation by supporting him strongly at the most recent election.

CASE OF JOHN FINLAYSON

Mr Runciman: In the absence of the Minister of Health, I would like to direct this question to the Attorney General. Hopefully he will be familiar with the topic. He may be aware that John Finlayson is going to be appearing before the Lieutenant Governor's Board of Review next week, on 27 April, with respect to placement of that individual. A number of years ago, he was found responsible for the sexual assault and murder and mutilation of a young Toronto boy. Subsequent to that, he was released into the community and committed another violent act and was found not guilty by reason of insanity once again. Now this hearing is taking place next week.

The mother of young Kirk Deasley, Carol Ann Deasley, has asked to have the opportunity to appear before the review board

and give testimony in respect of her concerns about Mr Finlayson and the possible future release of that gentleman once again into the community. Does the ministry have a position on this sort of intervention on the part of victims?

Hon Mr Scott: As the honourable member knows, the Lieutenant Governor's warrants board is chaired by Mr Justice Callon of the Supreme Court of Ontario and has vice-chairmen, including a number of other Supreme Court and district court judges in the province. It is not a board within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Attorney General but, as the honourable member noted, it is within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health. The honourable member can be certain I will bring his concern and the concern of his constituent to my colleague's attention as promptly as I can.

1430

Mr Runciman: I appreciate that response. I simply want to say that when he was contacted some time ago in respect to this by members of the media, Mr Justice Callon indicated: "I do not want to hear any of that emotional stuff. I do not think it is helpful to the process."

Again, I would like to hear the Attorney General's views in respect to this sort of impact statement being made before the review board process. We are talking about a board that makes decisions to release individuals like Mr Finlayson into the community, and in this instance and in many others that we are aware of criminal acts have once again been committed against the citizens of this province. I think it is important that, perhaps through the Minister of Health but certainly the Attorney General, the government take a strong stand in support of individuals like Mrs Deasley having an opportunity to be heard.

The gentlemen of the review board are releasing these chaps into the community. They should be responsible. They should have those witnesses appearing before them so they can understand, in a very real sense, the impact on those families.

Hon Mr Scott: As the honourable member knows, the board is regulated, among other things, by the provisions of the Criminal Code. I am sure every member in the House wants the board to operate as effectively and as fairly in the public interest as it possibly can. That is why the government has gone to the trouble to make sure that it is chaired by a senior justice of the Supreme Court of Ontario of very great experience.

I understand the honourable member's concerns. I must take them at face value, because I have not heard the comment that he has assigned to Mr Justice Callon. I will ask the Minister of Health to make an inquiry about the matter.

ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEE CLAIMANTS

Mr Owen: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. I have asked and raised this question on previous occasions in this House and, so far as I can tell, nothing has been done.

I have been told there are over 20,000 refugees within Ontario who are not allowed by the federal government to work and who therefore must be assisted by the provincial taxpayers. I hear the costs can be in excess of \$100 million annually to this province. Yet when you talk to each of these refugees, as I have done, you realize that they desperately want to work, to support themselves and to support their families.

My question is, does the minister have any up-to-date figures as to the number of these refugees in this province and the cost to the taxpayers of this province?

Hon Mr Beer: My honourable colleague raises an issue which is once again of some concern to the province, not only to my ministry and our government but indeed to a number of municipalities. In fact, yesterday I met with the chairman of Peel region and a number of his officials to discuss some of the concerns they have around the increasing number of refugee claimants in that municipality and the cost to them. I have also had an opportunity to discuss that with Metropolitan Toronto, and I know that Ottawa, Hamilton and others have raised concerns.

The honourable member might be interested to know that in February 1989 some 21,000 refugee claimants were on the general welfare assistance rolls. Some changes were made subsequent to February 1989, but today the figure is over 15,000 and is beginning to climb again; and of those 15,000, approximately 12,700 are in Metropolitan Toronto, and that number is growing by some 600 cases a month.

For this reason, at the end of March, I wrote to the federal minister, Barbara McDougall, and suggested to her in the strongest terms that it was time the federal government assumed the financial responsibility for the refugee claimants in Ontario.

Mr Owen: I know that other provinces, such as Quebec and Newfoundland, are also carrying a heavy burden in this problem, as we are. I am also told that the federal immigration system is not waging a very effective battle in eliminating or even reducing the number of refugee cases. I wonder if it would be possible to give an ultimatum to the federal government that it either allow the work permits or pick up the tab for the problems it is causing by its policies or that it provide us with the opportunities for work on federal, municipal or provincial projects. Something has to be done, because it is unfair in the present situation.

Hon Mr Beer: We have looked at a number of options to see what we as a province can do but, as the honourable member knows, the legal responsibility for the refugee claimants rests with the federal government. We also know that the vast majority of refugee claimants want nothing better than to get accepted into the country as refugees and to become full members of the society; indeed, when they are given refugee status, we see that this is precisely what they do.

I have said to the municipalities with which I have been meeting and discussing this issue that I would expect a response from Mrs McDougall very shortly, and if we do not we are going to move in a very aggressive fashion in conjunction with the municipalities most affected to get the federal government to accept its responsibilities in this regard. To a number of approaches that have been suggested, they have said no, or they have cancelled other approaches that provided financial help. But now, when we look at it, the actual dollar figure last year was over \$112 million in Ontario. For the coming year we are projecting \$128 million, but if the situation continues to deteriorate that figure will of course go up. It is time the federal government took some action.

EARLSCOURT CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE

Mr Allen: My question is also to the Minister of Community and Social Services. I want to acquaint the minister with some ripple effects of the unfortunate funding and policy response the government has made to children's mental health centres.

I refer to the Earls court Child and Family Centre, which has recently had to reduce the catchment area it has served in central Toronto, broadly speaking, which has had to lay off

three of its workers and which now, as a result of funding constraints, has to close down a reception class for transient children exposed to family violence who come from the four interval and transition houses in the area of Huron Street school—the Annex, as it is called.

The minister will be aware of not only the social problems but the academic problems faced by children in those emotionally difficult circumstances and yet, as a result of funding constraints, Earls court has had to give notice that at the end of this school year that reception class, unique in this country and described as a very valuable experiment in Canada's mental health, will have to close. Why is the minister standing by and letting that happen?

Hon Mr Beer: Our colleague the honourable member for St Andrew-St Patrick has also raised that specific issue with me regarding the transition class, and I think, as the honourable member has noted, Earls court has done some extremely innovative work in a number of areas dealing with this and other issues. It is my understanding that this program at the present time has been transferred to another school.

One of the issues that has come out of that is, given the effectiveness of the program at Huron, whether there is some way in which it could be continued there as well as at another centre. As the honourable member mentions, we have had some funding problems in the broad area, but we are looking to see what we might be able to do in that regard.

I would underline, though, that the decision to move the program, as I understand it, was made by Earls court and that the program is continuing. I think the issue is to see whether or not it could continue as well at the Huron location in Toronto.

Mr Allen: The program itself is not transferable; it is not being displaced into another school. What we have is another school with a set of transient children of a slightly different character, but also high-risk, who will be served at the Lord Dufferin school as distinct from the Huron school.

The problem there, and the tragedy, I am told by Earls court, is that if there is no more top-up funding to meet pay equity needs in the Earls court situation, the program will never open at all. So instead of having two high-risk children's groups being served in at least one location, we will have neither of them served in either location, and the program will be totally gone.

It is a very serious situation that needs to be addressed in the next couple of months, and I hope the minister will find a way to do that. What does the minister plan to do?

Hon Mr Beer: We do take it very seriously. In fact, one of the reasons we moved to increase the percentage increase for all the transfer payment agencies in the Ministry of Community and Social Services was the various pressing needs they had. We hope that the move to 5.5 per cent will be helpful in this regard as well, but we are mindful of the particular nature of that program. I have directed that we look very carefully at it, and indeed we are doing that to see how we can meet the needs of those two programs. I believe that, working with them, we will be able to find a way to resolve this situation.

1440

CRITICAL CARE NURSING

Mr Eves: I have a question of the Premier. He will be aware, I am sure, of an external report done in late February 1990 with respect to cardiovascular services at the Hospital for Sick Children here in Toronto. I am sure he will also be aware

that the report, which was done by an independent review team headed by Dr Salerno of St Michael's Hospital, concludes:

"At the crux of the matter is the inability of the hospital to retain recruited critical care nurses. The nursing department has done everything that is possible internally to deal with the issue of retention within those areas."

What does the province plan to do to assist the Hospital for Sick Children in this regard?

Hon Mr Peterson: I wish I could respond in more detail to my honourable friend's question. It is a fair question. The minister is not here; I am sure she could assist him more on the specific details of that question. But there is no question that is a problem, particularly for the downtown hospitals in Toronto, where a high percentage of the medical care is based, as my honourable friend knows. Getting technical staff is a problem in a number of areas. Mind you, it is an international problem, as my honourable friend knows as well. I have talked to a number of health professionals who tell me that.

With respect to the specific question my honourable friend raises, I am sorry I do not have the specific answer, but I will discuss it with the minister.

Mr Eves: Perhaps I can help the Premier out somewhat. Last Thursday I did ask the Minister of Health this very question, because the first recommendation in this report is a submission to the Minister of Health, which was made about four weeks ago now, requesting some \$8 million in additional funding to address this very particular problem of a critical care nursing shortage at the Hospital for Sick Children. In her response, the minister relayed some initiatives that she has taken about nursing generally in the province. She relayed the information the Treasurer had given her about the additional funding to hospitals but did not specifically address this particular problem and this particular request for which an answer was requested by the hospital, I might add, by last Thursday, which is why I asked the question on that day.

Can we get a commitment out of the Premier today that he will direct the Minister of Health to look seriously at the Hospital for Sick Children's proposal and respond in a positive manner so that these children are not on waiting lists for 16 weeks on average and do not have to go, as two children did recently, to Minneapolis and other places in the United States for treatment?

Hon Mr Peterson: I will obviously tell the minister of my honourable friend's concern. Again, I apologize; I cannot tell him the details.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr Tatham: My question is for the Minister of Housing. Affordable housing is a problem in Ontario. Government land is made available in the province from time to time for the purpose of development. Considering the need for affordable housing, can the minister update the members of this House on the policy relating to the lease or sale of government land for affordable housing?

Hon Mr Sweeney: As my colleague knows, the Minister of Government Services is responsible for the land holdings of the government. A decision was made by this government that any lands that were surplus to the needs of other ministries would be made available for housing first. We have, over a little while, put a number of pieces of government land on the market. As the member will recall, last December, I think it was, I explained a situation in Stoney Creek.

The member may also be aware of the fact that we do make government land available for non-profit housing corporations. Up until this point, we have sold them that land and incorporated that cost into our payments. We have decided, however, that from now on, whenever we make government land available for non-profit housing, it will be by lease.

With respect to making land available to the general population, we have indicated that we are quite prepared to make it available either for lease or for sale, whichever is in the best interests of and produces the lowest-cost housing for the people who wish to buy it.

Mr Tatham: Can the minister advise the House of the timetable for releasing government land for housing?

Hon Mr Sweeney: We plan in this calendar year of 1990 to have about six or seven fairly large land holdings released for housing. The member will recall that earlier this year—as a matter of fact, just about a month ago—I announced the Seaton project, which involves about 7,000 acres of government land. We are currently negotiating with Markham for about 500 acres of government land, which would produce housing for about 15,000 people. We are negotiating in Windsor right now for government land. We are negotiating in Bowmanville. We are negotiating in Kitchener-Waterloo and in Oakville, I believe. Those are the ones that come to my attention.

Over the next couple of years, there are about 20 sites that we will be making available for either sale or lease or lease-to-buy. It is our goal to make them available to the public in the way that will produce the lowest-cost housing for the most number of people.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICE FOR THE DISABLED

Mrs Grier: My question is for the Minister of Transportation. Earlier this month, the minister announced his \$5-billion package for public transit in Metropolitan Toronto, a plan that was welcomed by the municipalities and the opposition parties in this House. At that time, I pointed out the glaring omission of any commitment to making those new transit systems fully accessible to the disabled.

Can the minister explain that omission, and given that it is so much cheaper to make a system accessible when you are first building it rather than retrofitting it, can he give us some commitment that he will provide the funding to allow those new systems to be used by all the people of the Metropolitan Toronto area?

Hon Mr Wrye: I am well aware of the fact that this is a very important issue to which there has been considerable discussion and attention throughout the greater Toronto area. As the honourable member knows, a number of reports have been prepared by the Toronto Transit Commission itself.

I can tell the member that while the discussions continue and indeed while our progress on this issue continues, and it has seen a budget which has grown by leaps and bounds and a commitment to transportation for the disabled which has grown very, very quickly—I think over 90 communities now are affected—nevertheless the issue of accessibility is an important one. We have indicated that in the building of new stations, and in making provisions for the expansion of the system, provision for accessibility will be contained within.

Mrs Grier: I welcome that commitment. I want to ask the minister a more specific question. In March, Metro council passed a resolution endorsing a 10-year plan to make its system retrofittedly accessible. The plan was called Choices for the

Future. Can the minister tell us whether he has met with Metropolitan Toronto around these proposals and whether he is prepared to support the 10-year plan that would make the existing TTC system more accessible?

Hon Mr Wrye: I can say to the member and to my colleagues that this government has been proceeding with a whole range of options, and certainly public transit is one of them, not just for the disabled but for the frail elderly. In that regard, such issues as kneeling buses and others are issues which we are moving on immediately.

I am aware of the latest proposals from Metro council. I have not had an opportunity to review them with Chairman Tonks and the leadership of Metro council yet. Obviously, as the member knows, since she alluded to it in the preamble to her first question, there have been a number of other very central issues we have been dealing with, but this is a very, very important issue and I expect to have these discussions with Metro council to see how, working together, we can make progress on this issue in the years to come.

TIRE TAX

Mrs Marland: My question is for the Minister of the Environment. We are aware that the government announced the new tire tax last summer. We are also aware that it is up to in excess of \$40 million at this point. We had the excitement of the announcement of the program, of course, following the fire at Hagersville. The announcement for the program was approximately between \$13 and \$16 million. That would probably leave a balance of maybe \$25 million that is yet unaccounted for from last year's accumulation on tire tax. Would the minister like to tell this House what he is doing with the money he is collecting under the pretence of tire tax for environmental programs?

Hon Mr Bradley: The member knows that in all jurisdictions of this kind, all money that is collected as a tax goes into the consolidated revenue fund to be distributed as seems fit. That is true in any province in Canada. It is true of the federal government. It is true in the province of Ontario. If the member looks at what the Treasurer announced in his last budget, he announced that such funds would be used for the purposes of recycling in the province, and indeed the member would know that the recycling commitment in Ontario this year is approximately \$55 million.

1450

Mrs Marland: I can only assume, since the minister has just told us, that this money is going into the black hole, that there are not any more programs he is announcing with that amount of dollars.

I know the minister is aware of the fact that St Lawrence Cement is advocating tire incineration. In fact, the general manager of St Lawrence Cement has been on *The Journal*, talking about burning tires at his plant. I would like to know from the minister whether tire incineration is a program that he is going to advocate and whether he supports St Lawrence Cement's interest in burning tires. If so, will he encourage them, in spite of the fact that they are out of compliance with their current operation in the manufacturing of cement and now have a control order issued against them?

Hon Mr Bradley: I am not sure whether the member is advocating that St Lawrence Cement be permitted to burn tires or not. I am sorry. Was that the question?

Mrs Marland: I asked the minister what he thinks.

Hon Mr Bradley: I see. The member is not saying whether she is advocating that. I was just wondering about that, because when I have had advice from various members of her party, that advice is not always the same, depending on where it is coming from.

The emphasis that we in the Ministry of the Environment have placed is on recycling efforts, all of the recycling efforts we can bring forward. Anybody who has any other solutions is welcome to bring those solutions forward. They must be proceeded with in an environmentally desirable manner. They must go through the approval process. But anyone who has any ideas which would be useful in dealing with this matter is most welcome to bring those to the attention of the government of Ontario and the Ministry of the Environment. We would evaluate them on the basis of all the environmental criteria that are set up and make a determination at that point in time.

DETROIT INCINERATOR

Mr M. C. Ray: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment concerning the Detroit incinerator, which is a matter of considerable importance to the people of Windsor and Essex county. The minister will know this is the largest incinerator in North America, and perhaps in the world, which has been permitted to be constructed and operate without the best available technology. I understand there has been a recent development with respect to this incinerator before the Michigan Air Pollution Control Commission. Could the minister please bring the House up to date on this matter?

Hon Mr Bradley: I certainly can. The member for Windsor-Walkerville, along with the member for Windsor-Sandwich, has brought this matter to my attention on a number of occasions. If my memory is correct, we were both in Windsor at the time and the member was receiving an award from the Windsor and District Clean Water Alliance for his initiative in being the first person to appear before the Michigan Air Pollution Control Commission. He was instrumental in bringing forward a resolution at city council to oppose the incinerator without the appropriate equipment.

I can inform the House that we filed a suit to force the operators of the incinerator to place what we refer to as state-of-the-art pollution control equipment on this new incinerator. We felt then, as we do now in 1990, that a Model T incinerator is not acceptable; that is, an incinerator with less than the best available pollution control technology.

Our suit, I am pleased to report to the member, has survived several challenges by authorities on the other side of the river. Yesterday evening the Michigan Air Pollution Control Commission voted, and I am happy about this, six to four to deny the incinerator an operating permit on the ground that it was emitting too much air pollution. We applaud this decision in the province of Ontario, and I understand that the incinerator is shut down at this time.

Mr M. C. Ray: Could the minister advise the House of the impact of this decision upon the future conduct of his continuing lawsuits in Michigan courts? Decisions of the Michigan Air Pollution Control Commission can obviously be appealed. What impact will that have on the minister's legal actions in the Michigan courts?

Hon Mr Bradley: The member is quite right. One decision of a board does not necessarily do the job. We recognize that there is the possibility of the city of Detroit and the operating

company in this case appealing this particular decision. That is why we intend to continue to press our case, which I believe ultimately we will win. I think it is a good case we are putting forward to get the people who run the Detroit incinerator to do the right thing and to spend the necessary money to ensure that the best pollution control equipment is on it and that they can eliminate unnecessary pollution that might be created by this particular facility.

It has been a long fight. It will continue in the courts, even though we have this favourable decision, which we think is a good decision. It is as a result of a number of people who have complained. We took the initiative as a ministry. We were criticized at the time by some who said we should not be involved in the American courts. We felt, on behalf of the people in Essex county, on behalf of the people in Windsor, that it was our responsibility to do that. That is why we undertook this action, which we will continue to pursue in the courts in the United States.

The Speaker: I appreciate the assistance of all members, but I have found that sometimes it seems to go a little longer when other people are speaking.

DENTAL HYGIENIST PROGRAM

Miss Martel: In the short time remaining, I have a question to the Minister of Colleges and Universities concerning funding for dental hygiene programs. He will know that two years ago Niagara College had to terminate its dental hygiene program because of the high cost of delivering it. He will also know that Cambrian College announced some months ago the suspension of its program because of the high cost of delivery.

At the same time, a task force within his ministry was put together to study all college programs, in particular high-cost programs. I am advised that this particular committee recommended a substantial increase in the weighting of dental hygiene programs across the province so that his ministry would flow more money to those colleges in order to allow them to deliver them. I am also advised that this report has been sitting on his desk for several weeks now.

If the minister would make some kind of announcement today about increased funding to those colleges, I am sure colleges like Cambrian would continue to pick up the cost in order to continue the programs. Will he give us that commitment today?

Hon Mr Conway: I thank my honourable friend the member for Sudbury East for raising this matter. It is true that at the Ministry of Colleges and Universities we have been reviewing a number of the formulae, but I can tell her that I am not prepared to give her a response to her particular question in that connection today, although I could observe that Cambrian has received a rather generous increase in overall allocations this year over last.

I would also observe, as I know she and the member for Nickel Belt would want me to observe, that matters of the management of those resources at a particular college fall within the purview of the board of governors and the management team at the particular institution. Neither the member for Sudbury East nor the member for Nickel Belt would want me, as the Toronto-based minister, to intrude upon the management rights of the local board or the local management team. But I do repeat that Cambrian has enjoyed a significant increase in funding this year over last.

MOTION

COMMITTEE SITTING

Mr Ward moved that the select committee on energy be authorized to meet following routine proceedings on the afternoon of Thursday 19 April 1990.

Motion agreed to.

1500

PETITIONS

LICENSING OF MOTORBOAT OPERATORS

Mr Daigeler: At the request of 14 of my constituents, I present a petition regarding Bill 8, although I do not support the intent of this petition.

SCHOOL OPENING AND CLOSING EXERCISES

Mrs Marland: I have a petition and I will read it as follows:

"We, the undersigned members and/or adherents of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Port Credit, Mississauga, protest strongly the removal of Christian traditions and values from the public school program, both elementary and secondary.

"Canada was founded on Christian principles and our elected representatives have received no mandate to alter the fabric of our country, the Charter of Rights notwithstanding.

"We realize that religious education in the form of classes in the schools is difficult to defend in this day and age, but we feel that the simple reading of the Lord's Prayer by the principal as part of the opening exercises should not be considered to contravene the Charter of Rights.

"We therefore urge our member of the Legislature and the Ontario government to support the return of the Lord's Prayer to the opening exercises of our public school system."

I have signed it.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

CHANGE OF NAME AMENDMENT ACT, 1990

LOI DE 1990 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LE CHANGEMENT DE NOM

Mr Sorbara moved first reading of Bill 148, An Act to amend the Change of Name Act, 1986.

M. Sorbara propose la première lecture du projet de loi 148, Loi portant modification de la Loi de 1986 sur le changement de nom.

Motion agreed to.

La motion est adoptée.

VITAL STATISTICS AMENDMENT ACT, 1990

Mr Sorbara moved first reading of Bill 150, An Act to amend the Vital Statistics Act.

Motion agreed to.

GOOD SAMARITAN ACT, 1990

Mr Haggerty moved first reading of Bill 151, An Act to relieve Persons from Liability in respect to Voluntary Emergency Medical and First Aid Services.

Motion agreed to.

Mr Haggerty: As an explanatory note, the purpose of the bill is to relieve persons from liability in respect to voluntary emergency first aid assistance or medical services rendered at or near the scene of an accident or other sudden emergency.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Resuming the adjourned debate on government notice of motion 30 on time allocation in relation to Bill 68, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance.

Mr Kormos: Once again, thank you, Mr Speaker. I should tell you at the outset my plans for this afternoon. I think it is important that if I lay out some sort of structure for these comments, you and the other members here might find it somewhat easier to follow along, recognizing that there is a course, there is a flow, or certainly an effort on my part to do that.

Yesterday I began with a reference to the critique by Mr Justice Barr, retired judge of the Supreme Court, with respect to Bill 68, and I am going to try to include that among my comments this afternoon. The rationale for that is to illustrate how complex the matter really is and why, because of that complexity, it calls for a reasonable period of time for debate. I am going to deal with the critique of Mr Justice Barr because, in my view, that goes directly to our opposition to this time allocation motion.

I am also going to talk about the objections that the Ontario Head Injury Association has to Bill 68 because those objections once again illustrate that this is not a simple matter, that it is not one that can be adequately dealt with, and should not be dealt with, in a period of a couple of hours. Indeed, it requires careful consideration by all the members of this Legislative Assembly.

I do also want to tell you, Mr Speaker, that I am buoyed by the Liberal backbenchers who have approached me to discuss their concerns about Bill 68. The Liberal backbenchers have approached me in confidence, of course, because they are still fearful of the House leader and the Minister of Financial Institutions. I have every intention of respecting their confidences, but I tell you, Mr Speaker, these Liberal backbenchers I have spoken with—oh, here are the Beauchesne and Erskine and May. We will be dealing with those a little bit too today.

These same Liberal backbenchers have not yet brought themselves to a position where they can indicate to me that they are prepared to vote against the legislation, but they do indicate that they are prepared to absent themselves from the House when this matter comes to a vote. As I say, I have every intention of respecting the confidence that those people request when they express their positions to me. But I do want those Liberal backbenchers who are beginning to understand just how bad Bill 68 is to know that they are in good company. They share concerns with a lot of people all over Ontario.

Indeed, Ontario is a big province. We are talking about a lot of people from the north, from the south, from areas up around James Bay, Hudson Bay. We are talking about people all over Ontario who are opposed to Bill 68. Those people have been brave enough to let their positions be known. This is important. It is important to understand that Bill 68 is so unpopular as a bit of legislation that, once again, it warrants far better treatment than the shabby treatment that would be given it if this Liberal time allocation motion, this Liberal closure were to pass.

I have been buoyed by the response of people who have sent notes and made phone calls. I want people to know that if

they call or write and ask for the FAIR tabloid, I will send them a copy of this tabloid, published by the Committee for Fair Action in Insurance, which discloses the results of a survey undertaken here in the province to show that the vast majority of people in Ontario oppose Bill 68.

If people want to call my office here at Queen's Park, at 965-7714, or if they want to send a note in the mail—just address it to me, Parliament Building, Queen's Park, Toronto—and ask for the FAIR brochure, we will send them that brochure with the information that is contained in it. They should know that is not taxpayers' money; that is contributions made by people across Ontario to this particular organization.

1510

Similarly, people may want one of these pin-on buttons. It says, "No-fault, No Thanks." I have a limited number of these that I will send out to people who phone in with their addresses. Again, they can call us here at Queen's Park, at 965-7714, or drop a note in the mail addressed to me, Queen's Park, Legislative Building, Toronto, Room 221, North Wing, to be specific. If they ask for the "No-fault, No Thanks" button or if they ask for a copy of the FAIR tabloid with all the information it has about how bad this legislation is, I will send them the tabloid or the button, for as long as these buttons last. I am looking forward to hearing from even more people.

By the way, just for those who might be concerned, we did excerpt parts of this FAIR tabloid because what it demonstrates is the massive opposition to Bill 68 in contrast to who supports Bill 68, this lonely little column here that says, "The auto insurance industry in Ontario." Yet all these good folks—trade unionists, workers, seniors, injured people, victims—they all oppose Bill 68, for good reason. That is why this time allocation motion is in such bad taste and really bad form, and quite frankly so dangerous.

So we will send out the FAIR tabloid for people who are interested in it, who phone my office, 965-7714, area code 416, or who write to me here at Queen's Park, Legislative Building, Toronto; similarly the buttons, these buttons which say, "No-fault, No Thanks." That is a relevant thing to talk about when we are talking about this time allocation motion, because people all over Ontario are saying to the Liberals here at Queen's Park: "No-fault? No way. No thanks, pal. We can do without, Mr Parliamentary Assistant, member for Guelph, Liberal front man for the Minister of Financial Institutions."

So there you go, the buttons and the FAIR tabloids, because people have been calling and people have been writing. It is important to understand what they have been saying and to hear what they have been saying. These Liberals are loath to listen to people across the province. That is why they short-circuited the committee hearings. It is time for them to sit here as a captive audience, if you will, and hear what real people in Ontario say about Bill 68, hear about what real working people say about Bill 68. Here is a letter I got the other day. It says:

"Dear Peter:

"Your filibuster has become my favourite television since Watergate. Go, go, go. I am a middle-aged woman, licensed and insured for 25 years, who allowed my insurance"—see, if the parliamentary assistant would listen to this he would understand how thoroughly inadequate Bill 68 is when it comes to the difficulties being experienced by Heather Dean from Scarborough.

She writes that she allowed her insurance to lapse during a year when she was hospitalized and convalescing and temporarily disabled. She said, why pay insurance if she was un-

able to drive? That is a reasonably logical thing for anybody to do, is it not? To ask themselves, "Why should I pay insurance," as Ms Dean asked herself, "if I'm convalescing and I'm not going to drive anyway?" So she let her insurance coverage on her car lapse.

"Wrong move," said the insurer, as he announced to Ms Dean that she would have to acquire Facility Association coverage. The member for Guelph should listen carefully, please. The Minister of Financial Institutions ain't here. Hopefully, if the minister is still talking to the parliamentary assistant him, he can convey this message to the minister. The insurer announced that Ms Dean would have to acquire Facility coverage. He asked her, "How is Allstate supposed to know that you didn't have a major accident during the period you weren't insured?"

Ms Dean writes: "The Liberals' insurance legislation shares the fatal failing of their rent review legislation. The Liberals have a fanatical ideological commitment to the starting point that all the players in the group to be regulated are honourable gentlemen"—and gentlewomen—"who would never deceive the government and have no appetite for gouging."

Ms Dean is dead on. She is dead on. Just as the Liberals' rent review legislation in this province caters to and accommodates the big, wealthy landlords and developers who could manipulate that so-called rent review regulatory system, their suggestion about what type of commission will be established pursuant to Bill 68, once they ram that through this Legislature, is once again going to create that same industry-loaded bias.

The insurance industry and these Liberals would have us believe that the industry being regulated, the auto insurance industry, consists of honourable gentlemen and gentlewomen. I say to the contrary. Ms Dean knows better and I say better the Liberals should wake up and see what is going on around them. They are not honourable gentlemen and gentlewomen, they are not people who would never deceive the government and they are not people who have no appetite for gouging. As a matter of fact, specifically to the contrary, each and every instance. Ms Dean goes on and writes:

"Since this is not the case, they consistently fail to anticipate the real-world consequences of their legislation. Your kid-smashed-by-the-drunk-driver scenario is a particularly defensible type of analysis. It should be done with any legislation. Without this type of game playing in advance we spend our next 10 years using all our fingers and toes to plug the leaks in the dike when these things do happen and the faults in the legislation are revealed, one by one, by the suffering of the victims of hasty legislation. Think it through for them, Baby Blue." That is Heather Dean from Orton Park Road in Scarborough.

Once again, Ms Dean's analysis is 100 per cent correct, is it not? She is dead on. The fact is she is trying very hard to send a message to these Liberals. These Liberals do not want to listen. They do not even want to debate. That is what time allocation is all about. That is what closure is all about. Closure is all about muzzling the opposition so that you are not required to defend, in this instance, bad, bad legislation.

I can ask the members this as well: Is that very fair, to not permit debate about a piece of legislation, like Bill 68, that is going to have such a serious impact on so many people's lives? Is that fair, to not allow discussion and debate about that bill? Of course it is not. Would a democratic government, would a government that had a sense of responsibility to democratic principles muzzle the opposition? Of course not. A democratic government would welcome debate would say—

Hon Mr Ward: Hear, hear. Let the majority speak.

Mr Kormos: Exactly, that is the point—"Let's discuss the issue." That is what a democratic government would say. It is not what the Liberals here in Ontario say, no. They want to use their majority to smash all those principles upon which this institution, this Legislative Assembly is built. They have demonstrated it. They demonstrated it yesterday. They demonstrated it back on 3 April, when the House leader for the Liberals moved this time allocation motion.

Once again, all he has got to do is withdraw this motion. He has just got to withdraw the motion, so we can get down to talking about Bill 68, which is all that we ever wanted to do, discuss Bill 68 and point out to the Liberals here how unfair Bill 68 is to so many people in Ontario. That is why we are opposing this time allocation motion and that is why it is so horribly important to us, because we believe in democracy, we believe in fair play, we believe that the interests of the people of Ontario should be represented here at Queen's Park, and not just the interest of the big, wealthy, powerful auto insurance industry, that same auto insurance industry that has been pulling the strings of this government, making it do their bidding.

1520

That is what Bill 68 is all about. Bill 68 is all about making big new profits for the auto insurance industry. Bill 68 is all about increasing premiums for drivers by as much as 50 per cent. That is what the Minister of Financial Institutions said. The member for Guelph, poor man, when he was sitting with that standing committee on general government, midway through that committee's hearings—and I will bet you dollars to doughnuts, Mr Speaker, without any consultation with the member for Guelph—was confronted, as we all were, with the promise of the Minister of Financial Institutions, published in a Toronto newspaper, that once Bill 68 is passed premiums are going to go up by as much as 50 per cent for drivers in Ontario. That is drivers with regular insurance.

What we learned through the press, in the last week and a half, was that some 300,000 drivers, almost a third of a million drivers here in Ontario, if Bill 68 is passed by these Liberals, are going to face premium increases of as much as 80 per cent. Did the members read that? Do they remember that in the Toronto newspaper? Three hundred thousand drivers are being promised premium increases of as much as 80 per cent, because these are the ones who are going to be forced into Facility Association, 80 per cent premium increases for almost one third of a million drivers. And that is in the first instance. Lord only knows what is going to happen in the months, and indeed few short years, following the implementation of this bad legislation.

That is why we want to send copies of this tabloid, the FAIR tabloid, to people who call or write to my office here at Queen's Park, and that is why we want to see people wearing these "No-fault, No Thanks" buttons and we are prepared to make these available to people who just call or write as long as they are available. And that is why I am so pleased to hear from people like Heather Dean in Scarborough, who writes about how disappointed she is in this Liberal government here in Ontario, she like so many others and certainly like myself.

I will say it to you, Mr Speaker, let's see this debate ended right now. Let's see it go to the ultimate jury. Let the Liberals call an election. Let's have an election call right now. Let's have them call an election so we can talk about Bill 68 with the public in Ontario, with the electorate. The sad thing is that there are a whole lot of Liberals over there who had better start talk-

ing about some retirement plans, because people in Ontario will not tolerate being sold out by the Liberals so that the auto insurance industry in Ontario can enjoy windfall profits of \$1 billion as a result of Bill 68 being rammed through this Legislature.

Heather Dean from Scarborough is not alone. Donna Moscattini phoned in to say she has been following this on her cable TV and she is proud of the position the New Democrats are taking in opposition (1) to the closure being imposed on us by the Liberals and (2) to Bill 68 because she knows Bill 68 is bad legislation and should be dumped.

Helen Hanson from North York phoned up to say she is delighted with the work that we are doing against Bill 68. She is really frightened of the impact that Bill 68 will have on herself, her neighbours and her family. She is sure that people are going to suffer if Bill 68 is rammed through this Legislature by the Liberals. And Helen Hanson from North York is right.

Mac Galbraith phoned up from Mississauga, an interesting person. He is a cousin of John Kenneth Galbraith. Later, if some of the Liberal members want to speak to me in the hall, I will tell them who John Kenneth Galbraith is. He is a great Canadian. But Mac Galbraith called in from Mississauga and said he has been following this debate. He indicated that he has been voting Liberal. He says, "Never again."

Ken Harris from Mississauga called up. He said congratulations to the New Democrats and the work we are doing against Bill 68. He says that Bill 68 is going to create social injustice for all people. Again, Ken Harris is right on, he is 100 per cent correct.

Dave Bogdon called from Kitchener. He is a member of the federal Liberal Party. He was very specific about telling my office staff that he was a member of the federal Liberal Party. But Dave Bogdon called to say that he supports the New Democrats' position on Bill 68 wholeheartedly. He wonders how much personal disability insurance one would have to buy to protect oneself under the proposed system and what do you do if you cannot operate your business and others are relying on you. Mr Bogdon's concerns are legitimate, and some time next week I am going to be talking about some scenarios wherein the concerns that Mr Bogdon speaks of will actually arise for small business people.

Bill 68 is not just an attack on women. It is not just an attack on farmers and farm workers. It is not just an attack on working people. It is not just an attack on the middle class. It is an attack on small business people too, because small business people will suffer under this proposed system that the Liberals want to ram through and that the insurance companies support, oh so fervently.

Val Leroux from Dundas called up. He was an insurance adjuster for 12 years.

An hon member: You're kidding.

Mr Kormos: The problem is that the Liberals are so slavish in their relationship with the auto insurance industry that they are not prepared to listen to others who have extremely legitimate insights. Remember, we spent a lot of time trying to explain to the Liberals why Mr Justice Haines's critique of Bill 68 was significant and something that warranted debate? Mr Justice Haines—a lifetime as often as not acting for insurance companies, as a defence counsel. Now what better source of insight and information could one ever ask for?

Once again, here is Val Leroux, 12 years as an insurance adjuster. He says, regarding the filibuster, "Keep doing it. The implications of Bill 68 are horrendous. There's not going to be a

saving of one cent," not to drivers. Heck, no. Drivers are going to face premium increases of up to 50 per cent, plus a third of a million drivers are going to be forced into Facility, new members of Facility, and they are going to face premium increases of 80 per cent.

That is exactly why the member for Guelph, the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions, nice guy that he appears at times, does not want to debate Bill 68 here in this Legislature. Because the member for Guelph does not want to be confronted with the reality of 50 per cent—indeed, 80 per cent—premium increases, for not just a handful of drivers but for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of thousands of drivers.

1530

Were that not the case, then all the House leader has to do is send me a note saying that he wants to stand up to withdraw this closure motion. That is all he has to do and I will sit down and then we can start talking about Bill 68, instead of having to talk about the closure motion that the Liberals are trying to impose on us.

There was an interesting phone call this morning from Fred Brown on Tedford Drive in Scarborough. Mr Brown is a senior citizen and Mr Brown is extremely concerned about what will happen to people who might want to drive to Florida, as seniors have every right to do, those who wish to and have earned the luxury of a few weeks of sun in the wintertime.

But what about the seniors who have to drive to Florida if they will not be covered? In fact, if they are involved in a motor vehicle accident, the rules of the jurisdiction in which the accident occurs will apply and their insurance coverage may not be adequate under Bill 68. That puts the little house trailer down in Daytona Beach at risk. It puts the vehicle, the old 10-year-old, 11-year-old or 12-year-old car that they might keep down south, at risk, because insurance coverage under Bill 68 is going to be designed for Ontario, not for North Carolina, South Carolina or Florida.

No bloody wonder that tourism is down in this province. There should be a sign put up at the border crossings that does not just say, "No studded tires in Ontario," but says, "If Bill 68 gets passed, don't you dare get injured in Ontario, because Ontario's insurance laws will bankrupt you as an innocent injured victim so that insurance companies can make profits that they have never dared dream of before." That is what the sign at Fort Erie, at Niagara Falls, at Windsor, should say.

There are some who say that by our trying to debate this time allocation motion we are delaying Bill 68. I say, good, because every day that we prevent this crummy legislation from becoming law we protect the rights of perhaps a few more innocent injured victims. What Bill 68 is all about is taking away rights from the people who are most vulnerable, taking away the rights of innocent injured victims to be compensated for their pain and suffering and their loss of enjoyment of life.

As I told you, Mr Speaker, people across Ontario—it is a big province, is it not, Mr Speaker?—are saying no to Bill 68. They are trying to get the message across to some of these thick-headed Liberals here that the people of this great province do not want Bill 68. They do not want to see the right of innocent injured victims to be compensated for pain and suffering stripped away from people here in Ontario.

People like Norman Biback do not want to see that. This was a fax message. He writes: "I have been watching you on television. I am very impressed with the way you are"—he was being flattering there and I appreciate it, but my modesty

prevents me from reading that. I appreciate the comments of Mr Biback.

Mr Adams: Read it. Come on, let's hear it.

Mr Kormos: Okay. The Liberals want to hear it. They have insisted. Mr Biback writes that he has been "very impressed with the way that you are presenting yourself. Just as a comment aside, if it were me, I would demand"—"demand" is underlined—"to know why my rights as a citizen are arbitrarily being taken away from me by a government that never raised this issue prior to the election."

Interesting, is it not? Once again, that is why the Minister of Financial Institutions and that is why the Premier of this province and leader of that provincial Liberal Party do not want to see Bill 68 debated.

Mr Biback writes: "I wonder if the Liberals would be in power if they advised the people of this province that they were going to take away our basic given rights to take action against a person or persons that caused us damage. Keep up the good work." Well, Mr Biback, you are right. The Liberals did not campaign on Bill 68. They did not campaign on threshold insurance. The Premier of Ontario promised in September 1987 that he had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums.

The Premier of Ontario promised three days before the general election in 1987 that he had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums, and what do we get? We get premium increases of not just 50 per cent, but now almost one third of a million drivers in Ontario are going to be facing premium increases of up to 80 per cent.

How could the Premier promise that he had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums and yet produce legislation that is going to increase premiums by not just 50 per cent, but for a third of a million people in this province by as much as 80 per cent? How could the Premier do that?

I ask, more important, why would he do that? Why would he promise three days before the last general election that he had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums when all he has done is produce legislation that is going to create a billion dollar payday for the auto insurance industry?

It is going to take away the rights of at least 95 per cent of all innocent injured victims to be compensated for pain and suffering; it is going to take that right away. They will not even be able to think about being compensated, because what Bill 68 does, what this threshold system does that the Liberals are trying to impose on drivers, taxpayers and victims in Ontario, is that it makes it impossible for them to be compensated for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life.

What happens is that—never mind the insurance company—an injured person, a victim, cannot even look to the wrongdoer. This does not just protect the insurance company from paying compensation; it protects the wrongdoer from paying compensation, just as Bill 68 can sometimes treat a drunk driver with more compensation than the victim of that same drunk driver, just as Bill 68, this Liberal insurance scheme, can sometimes treat the car thief. Believe it or not, it can give the car thief more compensation than his or her victim lying in a pool of blood on the asphalt.

I had a hard time believing it myself until I read the legislation very carefully and until I listened carefully to the submissions of learned people appearing in front of the standing committee on general government. It is true. Bill 68 is structured and designed so that a drunk driver can, in more than a

few instances, get more than his victim. Is that fair? Does that strike members as being fair? I think not.

These pages have been here for what, two days now? They know already that it is not fair. They know already that Bill 68 is not fair. It does not treat young people like them fairly. It does not treat them fairly at all. How come the Liberals cannot get the same message through their thick skulls?

J. T. Fidler from Toronto, again, faxes: "I have been following your arguments on the legislation this week and simply want you to know that I have great respect for the job you are doing and hope that you have the strength to continue for as long as it takes for the government to see the sense in your position." Again, Mr Fidler is right.

1540

Craig Brown, Toronto, "I am following your valiant filibuster with interest and amazement." I appreciated that. "Your strength of conviction is rare and commendable. Please keep up your good work, and bring the government to its knees. All my best wishes, now and in the future."

Because of the stranglehold that the Liberals with their majority have imposed on the opposition, because of their closure motion, because of their disdain and disregard for long-time rules of procedure, the Liberals have been able to make it very difficult for the opposition to do its job here at Queen's Park.

I appreciate Mr Brown's message, and I apologize to Mr Brown because I am not sure, with the jackboot tactics of the Liberals here at Queen's Park, that the opposition can by itself bring the government to its knees, but the voters of Ontario can.

Mr Lupusella: You lost the game. The last provincial election was a lesson to you.

Mr Kormos: That member had better start looking for a retirement home. I tell him that he had better start thinking about what his next job is going to be.

I know that the Liberal backbenchers I have spoken with, who have concerns about this legislation, intend to absent themselves from the House when a vote is taken—I have no control over these people who confide in me their concern about Bill 68, but I tell members this: I wish they would go one step farther and start joining the people in Ontario in speaking out against Bill 68, because it is a bad law. It is going to hurt good people. That is not what legislation should be about. Legislation should be about helping people, not hurting people. What Bill 68 is about is hurting people.

Mr Futerman sends a note, which is appreciated: "I want you to know that many of us who have watched you perform applaud your courage and your commitment to the people of this province. We are indeed proud of you. Keep up the good work." Again, I appreciate that from Mr Futerman here in Toronto.

I do want you to know, Mr Speaker, as an illustration of how widespread the opposition is to Bill 68 and how important it is that we have a full debate and how important it is that we similarly defeat this time allocation motion, this effort on the part of the Liberals to censor, to muzzle, to gag the opposition, that in Waterloo on 25 April 1990 there is going to be a rally at the Waterloo Inn, 475 King Street North, Waterloo, at 7 pm. Everyone is invited.

It is a function that is being sponsored by BATFIV—Better Accident Treatment for Injured Victims in Ontario. Steve Crouse is the president of that organization, and he and his volunteers have organized what will be an impressive educa-

tional rally for people to learn all about Bill 68. As I say, that is just next week, 25 April in Waterloo at the Waterloo Inn, 475 King Street North.

The member for Leeds-Grenville, the Tory insurance critic, is going to be there speaking. Dr David Corey, a chronic pain specialist, Behavioural Health Clinic in Toronto, is going to be there speaking. Fred Sagel, a Kitchener-Waterloo lawyer, is going to be there to help people understand what Bill 68 is all about. Steve Crouse is going to be there. The emcee—I have not met this man—is going to be Kenny Hollis from Lulu's. The member is familiar with Lulu's in Kitchener-Waterloo, is he not? I am going to be there as well, as the New Democratic Party insurance critic.

There was a letter that went out 9 April 1990 from BATFIV to the Minister of Financial Institutions. It said:

"Dear Honourable Murray Elston:

"BATFIV is holding a rally to educate the people of Ontario about Bill 68, no-fault insurance. We would be very pleased if you could be one of our guest speakers. I have enclosed a flyer with the necessary information. A reply from you as soon as possible would be appreciated." This BATFIV is not a partisan organization. There is no effort on their part to have this rally in Waterloo on the 25th—when is that? Actually, that is a week from today. That is next Wednesday. I am last on the speaking list because it is around an hour's drive from Queen's Park to Waterloo. Once I get in the pickup truck and get to the 401, it takes no more than an hour. I am last on the list and there is plenty of time for me to get there. I just wonder, is the Minister of Financial Institutions going to accept the invitation or is the Minister of Financial Institutions afraid to debate Bill 68? I am looking forward to seeing whether or not the minister is there.

I tell members this: The people in Waterloo know that the Liberals here in Ontario are so deep in the back pockets of the insurance industry that the Liberals are spitting out lint.

Here is another letter, from Peter Boeckle. He starts by saying:

"Dear Peter:

"What can I say? No one could be fighting harder, working harder, day by day, hour by hour, to defend the honest drivers and innocent accident victims threatened by Bill 68."

They offer words of encouragement. I personally appreciate these phone calls and these letters, these notes.

It makes me all that much more committed to fighting this bad legislation and fighting this time closure motion that the Liberals want to pass so that they can muzzle and smother the opposition. That is what the Liberal game plan is all about: Chuck democracy out the window. The next step may well be to lock the doors of this assembly building. The next step on the part of the Liberals may be to simply lock the doors and send us home, because they do not have much respect for parliamentary tradition when they refuse to engage in open debate.

The Minister of Financial Institutions is prepared to take those principles, those traditions, those values and stomp them with the jackboots that he and every other Liberal member of this government wear when they approach things like Bill 68 with such an undemocratic perspective.

I have an interesting letter from London, Ontario from Ivan W. Kasiurak. He writes that he was watching TV. He indicates he is not a member of the New Democratic Party, but he is sure against Bill 68.

He writes: "I have been watching you fight with the Liberal bandits on Bill 68 and I would like to congratulate you. The Premier and Elston are giving the people of Ontario a lot of

loving but no kissing. I would like to give you my experience with the auto insurance industry."

1550

Then he writes about one more horror story, one more of the many horror stories that we keep on hearing about the abysmal treatment of victims by the auto insurance industry in this province, the same auto insurance industry that is so cozy in bed with the Liberals of Queen's Park, the same auto insurance industry that might as well have written Bill 68. What is remarkable is that Bill 68 gives the auto insurance industry more than even it dared ask for in its submissions to the Osborne inquiry.

Here is a horror story. Here is a frightening, tragic scenario and it comes to me from Thunder Bay in a letter dated 17 April 1990. It is about a lady there, Donna MacNeil. The letter is from her lawyers, Carrel and Partners, in Thunder Bay, a competent, good firm of good lawyers.

They write: "A client of mine, Donna MacNeil, has been watching your debate of the no-fault closure motion in the Legislature. I have been watching with some interest as well. Mrs MacNeil thanks you for the stand you are taking in the face of this sellout piece of legislation." It is not the first time we have heard this, is it? That is what Mr Justice Haines said was going to be the clear impression on the part of the people in Ontario once the Liberals rammed Bill 68 through, and that was going to be that the people of Ontario, hard-working people, were sold out by the Liberals in favour of the auto insurance industry in Ontario.

So they write about the sellout piece of legislation that Bill 68 is. He writes further: "Mrs MacNeil appreciates the difficulties the consumer will be faced with when forced to deal directly with an insurer on no-fault." This lawyer, Alex Demeo, writes that he represents Mrs MacNeil in a personal injury action. On 5 September 1988 she injured her back and neck. Her treating physicians are concerned about a possible thoracic outlet syndrome. Mrs MacNeil is a nurse and was working at the time of the accident. She has not worked as a nurse since. The pain, the discomfort, the disability that Mrs MacNeil suffers as a result of being a victim has prevented her from working since the date of this accident in September 1988. She has, Mr Demeo acknowledges, to a large extent recovered from her injuries but any attempts at the heavy work and lifting required of a hospital nurse result in a flare-up of her back pain.

Mrs MacNeil has been forced to change careers because of this. She has obtained employment as a bank teller, which pays approximately one half of what she had been able to earn as a nurse. Her no-fault insurer sent her a letter denying her further no-fault benefits. I enclose a copy of that letter. Shall I go to that? Because I would like to name the insurer. It is the Co-operators. That is some co-operation from the Co-operators, denying an injured victim what is rightly hers.

The Co-operators writes this letter, 6 April 1990, to Donna MacNeil:

"Re: Motor vehicle accident of September 5, 1988.

"Thank you for the information you were able to give me concerning your present employability status. It is my understanding that you are now working full time at the Royal Bank. Since you are no longer totally"—underlined—"disabled within the meaning of the wording set out under the standard automobile policy, we are no longer responsible to continue making total disability payments to you.

"It has been a pleasure meeting with you throughout your claim, and I would be glad to answer any questions you may have concerning your claim."

That was really big of them. That was really big of Co-operators. Here is a lady who because of her injury is unable to work as a nurse. She takes employment as a bank teller at half the salary, because she does not want to be a malingerer. The reason she takes that employment is that she cannot do her job as a nurse. The physical effort is simply too demanding in view of the thoracic outlet syndrome that she suffers from.

The Co-operators plays cat and mouse cruelly with a victim like Mrs MacNeil. Is that fair? We know it is not fair.

Mr Demeo writes on: "The letter states that because Mrs MacNeil is no longer totally disabled, she is no longer entitled to benefits. The existing no-fault insurance"—you see, there is absolutely nothing new about no-fault insurance here in Ontario. We have had no-fault benefits for well over a decade now. What is new about this legislation is the threshold, the provisions that deny innocent injured victims any compensation for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life. That is what is special, that is what is unique, that is what is new in Bill 68.

Mr Demeo from Thunder Bay, on behalf of his client Mrs MacNeil, writes:

"The letter states that because Mrs MacNeil is no longer totally disabled, she is no longer entitled to benefits. The existing no-fault insurance, however, provides that if she suffers substantial inability to perform the essential duties of her occupation, she is entitled to no-fault benefits. The policy goes on to provide that any income earned from other employment is deducted from the income used to calculate the no-fault benefit."

It is a cruel game that Co-operators is playing with their insured. The policy says that if she suffers substantial inability to perform the essential duties of her occupation, she is entitled, but because she does not want to be an unproductive member, she is doing the very best she can. She talked a job at half the salary because it is the only job she can do with her injuries.

Co-operators is another friend of the Premier of Ontario, real close with the Premier, real close with the Minister of Financial Institutions.

They deny this woman her no-fault benefits. They cruelly deny an injured person, their own insured, the no-fault benefits she is entitled to. Pretty crummy, shabby treatment.

"Mrs MacNeil is still entitled to benefits on any reasonable interpretation of the existing policy. Her insurer has required her to be totally disabled from any employment before continuing benefits. When I spoke with her, Mrs MacNeil had assumed that the insurers were right and was not thinking of questioning their denial of benefits."

See what happens, Mr Speaker? She was relying on their good faith. Good faith my foot.

Mr Pouliot: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I do not believe the House is duly constituted. May I respectfully respect a quorum check, please?

The Deputy Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1601

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum being present, the member for Welland-Thorold may proceed.

Mr Kormos: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I appreciate your assistance in getting Liberals in here so that they

can listen to what is happening, so they can hear about what is happening across Ontario.

Let me tell members what Mr Demeo writes about Mrs MacNeil. Mr Demeo writes this: "Mrs MacNeil is still entitled to benefits on any reasonable interpretation of the existing policy. Her insurer has decided to require her to be totally disabled from any employment before continuing benefits. When I spoke with Mrs MacNeil, she had assumed that the insurance companies were right and was not thinking of questioning their denial of benefits. She was relying on their good faith."

"After I explained what the policy really said, Donna MacNeil has become more concerned than ever about what will happen to injured people left, by virtue of Bill 68, to deal directly with the auto insurance industry. If there is any way of stopping the ramming through of this legislation, it would certainly benefit the people of Ontario."

We are not afraid to say, once again, that we are not beholden to the auto insurance industry the way the Liberals in Ontario are. We do not owe the auto insurance industry a darned thing, and it does not bother me to say that.

It does not bother me to tell you, Mr Speaker, that I am not here in this Legislature fighting so that the auto insurance industry can make bigger and better profits. I say that without hesitation, but I will sure fight to make sure that this legislation is not rammed through, because I am concerned. I am concerned about the drivers who are going to face premium increases if the Liberals have their way with Bill 68. I am concerned about the taxpayers who are going to be gouged to the tune of another \$141 million to \$143 million by virtue of the direct tax subsidies to the auto insurance industry that Bill 68 contains and I am concerned about the innocent injured victims who, if the member for Guelph has his way, are going to be denied compensation for pain and suffering and for loss of enjoyment of life.

If the minister and his parliamentary assistant, the member for Guelph, have their way and Bill 68 passes, 95 per cent of all innocent injured victims are going to be denied compensation for their pain and suffering and for their loss of enjoyment of life. Is that fair, Mr Speaker?

It boggles the mind to think that the member for Guelph would associate himself with a scheme that will deny to innocent injured victims, to 95 per cent of them here in the province of Ontario, the right to be compensated for pain and suffering and for loss of enjoyment of life. It is a sad day.

Mr Speaker, I told you a little while ago about Fred Brown, who called me from Scarborough, and I told you Mr Brown expressed concern. He expressed the same concern as was expressed by Mr Justice Haines in his letter to the government back a couple of months ago, the one I referred to a few days ago. Mr Brown from Scarborough, 36 Tedford Drive, has remarkable insights into this whole scheme.

He is concerned about the effect on people travelling outside Ontario, driving their cars, let's say, to Florida, as many seniors enjoy doing. That was raised in Windsor. The Liberals only let us sit for one day hearing people in Windsor because they knew the opposition to Bill 68 was so profound. The opposition to Bill 68 when the standing committee on general government sat, briefly as it did, was so great that the parliamentary assistant himself, the member for Guelph, said that the Liberals got hammered by the opposition during those hearings. That display of candour on the part of the member for Guelph was appreciated. It was a remarkable comment, yet it was oh, so true. They got hammered.

Windsor was one of the places where, because it was a border community, there was some concern expressed about the effect of Bill 68 on Ontario drivers travelling in other jurisdictions. This is the whole problem with the minister's refusal to participate in those same hearings. Do not forget, the minister refused, he thumbed his nose at those people who would attend before that committee. He sent the parliamentary assistant. When the issue was raised in Windsor about out-of-province travelling, the parliamentary assistant as much as went, "Huh?" The government had never canvassed the issue with its own staff. The parliamentary assistant as much as shrugged and went, "Huh?" And I am sure I heard him whisper to one of the staff people, "What the heck are these people talking about?" That was the problem with not having the minister there.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: If I could have a page come up here, please. The MPP for Dovercourt has obviously got time on his hands. If a page would take him the colouring book and the crayons, it might keep him occupied.

Would the page take those over to the member for Dovercourt? One should not walk in front of the Speaker. That is it. The MPP for Dovercourt might spend his time more appropriately by doing some colouring. He should keep it inside the lines. The Crayolas are sharp, but he should not worry but be careful.

In any event, we were in Windsor. I knew that the Liberal mentality was pretty childish so I brought a couple more sets of colouring books and crayons. If any of them act up just point them out to us, Mr Speaker. We will send a page over with more colouring books and crayons for the infantile Liberals here. Lord knows, they are not interested in talking about Bill 68. Once again, as long as they do it neatly and stay inside the lines, it would seem that they might better spend their time doing some creative artwork. The Crayolas and colouring books are on me.

In Windsor, the concern was raised about out-of-province driving and the impact of this legislation on Ontarians who might drive in Michigan, who might drive in other provinces, who might drive in American jurisdictions. That is what Fred Brown called to ask me about this morning. That is where I agreed with Mr Brown that indeed it was important to be discussed. But that is why the Minister of Financial Institutions and the Premier of Ontario do not want to have any debate before they ram Bill 68 through this Legislature, because concern about the out-of-province traveller—

Mr Ferraro: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would just like to say to the member opposite that we would love to have a debate if he would cease his verbal diarrhoea so that we would have the opportunity.

Mr Pouliot: I very rarely rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker, but I am both appalled and shocked and somewhat offended by the language, the analogy, the parallel, which is without validity. I am shocked, and I would like the honourable member to withdraw his remarks. My God, this is not a pool hall.

Interjections.

1610

The Acting Speaker: Are we ready? Can I proceed? The honourable member for Guelph has brought to all of our attention the length of time that the honourable member for Welland-Thorold is taking. He has used the kind of language that—here

I am, stuck with having to determine whether it is parliamentary or not. You know, a word—

Mr Ferraro: Mr Speaker, let me help you out.

The Acting Speaker: Would you?

Mr Ferraro: I am flushed with confusion and dismay at the verbiage used and I will retract it.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Guelph has retracted his unparliamentary statement, I say to the member for Lake Nipigon. With that in mind, we can proceed.

Mr Kormos: I do not understand what all the hullabaloo is about. The comments of the member for Guelph, scatological as they were, did not cause any concern on my part. I do not expect anything more profound from him. Do not forget, I had to sit through three or four weeks—that is all the Liberals would permit—of standing committee on general government hearings about Bill 68. I had to sit through three or four weeks and I saw a lot of shrugging and head-scratching and a lot of feverish whispering on the part of the member for Guelph to the staff persons from the Ministry of Financial Institutions. Stuff like, "Could you spell that for me?" "Those are awful big words they're using; do you think maybe you could write a précis later tonight?" So I am not concerned about the member for Guelph. I am concerned about his refusal to debate Bill 68.

All I need is a note from the Minister of Financial Institutions or from the Liberal House leader saying that he wants to stand up to withdraw this time allocation motion. That is all I want from them. I will sit down so we can start talking about Bill 68. You would be pleased about that, too, would you not, Mr Speaker? Here it is. How long now have we been discussing this time allocation motion? Three weeks now. Three weeks we have spent discussing a time allocation motion that was only just barely in order. Remember the agony of the Speaker when the Speaker had to rule on a point of order about this time allocation motion? Remember how the Speaker appeared to have approved the orderliness of the motion, but it seemed to me that it was only just barely? It was just barely.

The Liberals do not want to see Bill 68 discussed. They keep bringing motion after motion after motion. It is shameful. The sad thing is that the Minister of Financial Institutions is not here to participate even in his time allocation motion. He was not at the committee hearings to talk to people about Bill 68 then. He sent the member for Guelph and the member for Guelph did his very humble best, just as the member for Guelph does his humble best here in this Legislature now, trying as good as he can to deflect attention away from the real issues, because is that not what the Liberals here are all about: avoiding focusing on the real issues so that they can do their little smoke and mirrors, create those delusions and illusions with their legerdemain? But the problem is, it ain't working any more. It does not fly. The people in Ontario are saying, "No-fault, no way, no thanks," and "Dump Bill 68." Is that the very best that the member for Guelph can do? Is that the very best? I know you are as disappointed as I am, Mr Speaker.

Fred Brown from Tedford Drive in Scarborough, as I told you, gave me a call this morning, and he was concerned about the out-of-province traveller. I told Mr Brown that we had talked about that a few days ago. He apologized for having missed an afternoon. I said: "Don't worry about it. Call the Ministry of Financial Institutions. They may well be able to give you a video of the afternoons that you weren't able to see. At the very least they'll provide you with the Hansard transcript."

Once again, I encourage every single person who is watching to write to the member for Guelph, and they should address their correspondence, because the member for Guelph is the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions, to: Member for Guelph, Queen's Park, Legislative Building, Toronto, and ask the member for Guelph for a set of Hansard transcripts of this time allocation debate. They are free. The member for Guelph is virtually obligated to send them to you. It is his job. So write: Member for Guelph—and again, I am not referring to the member when I say his name—because when you write the correspondence it is nice to write a letter to Rick Ferraro, F-e-r-r-a-r-o, so write to: Rick Ferraro, F-e-r-r-a-r-o, Member for Guelph, or Rick Ferraro, F-e-r-r-a-r-o, MPP, Parliament Buildings, Queen's Park, Toronto. Write to that member. And again, the more of you who do it, the more pleased he would be, I am sure, to respond to your correspondence. Write to that member for Guelph and ask for a transcript of the time allocation debate from 3 April to the present. It is free. It is one of the few free things that anybody could get nowadays. I know that the member for Guelph would be more than pleased to accommodate people across Ontario in their requests for Hansard transcripts of these time allocation debates commencing 3 April on through to the present.

I appreciate the opportunity to share that with you, Mr Speaker, and I am looking forward to people doing that. Now do not forget, as I told you earlier, people who want a "No-Fault, No Thanks" button should either phone my office here at Queen's Park, area code 416, 965-7714, and ask for a no-fault button and we will send them a button as long as they last. Or those same people may want to call me here at Queen's Park, area code 416, 965-7714, and ask for a copy of the FAIR tabloid, which has all the data, all the details of the overwhelming opposition there is in Ontario to Bill 68. It has got a list, as you can see, Mr Speaker, of the people who are for Bill 68—that is a very lonely spot, for Bill 68—that is the auto insurance industry, and then all those groups and organizations in Ontario who are opposed to Bill 68.

It is fascinating reading, including—catch this: the people against Bill 68, the people who condemn this legislation—the Sudbury Provincial Liberal Association, which has instructed its member to vote against Bill 68. The Sudbury East Provincial Liberal Association does not have a Liberal member. Of course not. Our member for Sudbury East has serviced her community, her riding, so well that the Liberal riding association in Sudbury East knows it has not got a snowball's chance in Hades. The Sudbury East Provincial Liberal Association, notwithstanding that it does not have a Liberal elected and knowing full well that its NDP member for Sudbury East is going to do the right thing, calls upon all Liberal members to vote against Bill 68. All of them.

1620

That is contained in this FAIR tabloid, so to people who phone or who write to me, Queen's Park, Parliament Buildings, Toronto, and ask for the FAIR tabloid or for the no-fault button, I would be pleased to send these out promptly. I am pleased, as I told you, Mr Speaker, to have received all the phone calls and all the letters. I am thankful to the people for their encouragement, but I say this to them:

You know what side I am on. I am prepared to fight for the interests of hardworking people, for the interests of senior citizens. I am not here to protect the financial interests of the wealthy, powerful auto insurance industry like the Liberals are.

You know what is important, Mr Speaker? People across Ontario should be writing to the Premier, should be writing to their member, calling upon them to join this crusade against cruelly oppressive legislation, legislation that is going to cause premium increases of, now we know, not just 50 per cent, but up to 80 per cent. Almost a third of a million people in this province, once this legislation is rammed through, will face premium increases of as high as 80 per cent as a result of Bill 68. The rest of them will face premium increases of up to 50 per cent as a result of Bill 68.

Mr Ferraro: A point of order, Mr Speaker: It is painful enough to listen to this barrage, but I at least wish the member would be accurate. He is categorically, unequivocally wrong when he says the rest of the 6.2 million drivers will face increases of 50 per cent. He knows that is a lie, that it is wrong, and I wish he would correct the record.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Guelph: We have always gotten along. This is the second time you are making it awfully difficult for the Chair. If I remember under Erskine May, I only try to administer the rules of our standing orders. Notwithstanding one's personal feelings, of course, one is not to call one's colleague "a liar" or "has lied." If I recall, the honourable member—

Mr Ferraro: I retract that particular word, but not the substance of the statement, Mr Speaker, and I ask you to rule on that.

The Acting Speaker: Well, you almost speak like a lawyer. The honourable member for Welland-Thorold, the honourable member for Guelph has retracted his comment that you are lying, so might you continue on with your discussion?

Mr Kormos: Bring up a page, please. How are you doing, Tim? Would you please go out into the members' lobby and get me the Queen's Park telephone directory? Thank you.

Once again, this is all much ado about nothing. I do not mind if the member for Guelph makes comments like that. That is the best they can come up with, is it not? And that is pretty pathetic. We want to talk about Bill 68.

The people in Ontario know now that the Premier was less than complete in keeping his promise that he made back in 1987. He made a very specific promise that he had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums.

What would be interesting for people to do would be to let not only their own members know that they expect their own members to vote against Bill 68, but they should be ringing the—It has been a long time since bells rang here, and I think we need a little more bell-ringing, only I want telephone bells to ring. So what I want people to do is to get on the phone and phone the member for Guelph. You can phone him at his constituency office, and that is area code 519, 836-4190. Now tomorrow I am going to give his home number, but you can phone the member for Guelph at area code 519, telephone number 836-4190.

The Premier of Ontario: similarly area code—this is his constituency office—

Mr Pouliot: It is a collect call, I think.

Mr Kormos: Oh, call collect, by all means. Area code 519 again, because that is over in London. Call the Premier's constituency office and call over and over again. Keep registering your opposition to Bill 68. Make those bells ring. So the Premier in London at his constituency office—We are going to get to Queen's Park offices in a few moments and home num-

bers are going to be tomorrow. The Premier of Ontario in London, area code 519, 433-6631. So people should be calling collect to let the Premier know that they do not like time allocation any more than the New Democrats do, and they think this is a crummy motion that should be defeated.

So you call the member for Guelph in Guelph and you call him at area code 519, 836-4190, and you call the Premier at his constituency office. Make those bells ring in London, area code 519, 433-6631. Call these people collect. The Premier of Ontario should be more than pleased to accept collect phone calls because the Premier certainly cannot expect people to fork out their own hard-earned money when the Premier should want to hear from them. Similarly, the member for Guelph, as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions, makes extra salary. He is paid more than other Liberal backbenchers, and he similarly should be pleased to accept those collect phone calls.

Now we have to get down to Queen's Park numbers because we want to hear the bells ringing again. We want to hear those bells ringing. I know there are a whole lot of people who miss that.

Mr Pouliot: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: On the subject matter most relevant, of bells ringing, I note with regret again that out of a possibility of 94 members only 15 Liberal members are present. Therefore, may I respectfully draw your attention to the standing order regarding quorum?

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member has brought to the Chair's attention that a quorum is not present.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is present, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: The Clerk's office has advised me that a quorum now is present.

Mr Kormos: Once again, thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate your support.

We talked about the correspondence. We talked about the letter from Ivan Kasiurak in London. We are talking about the time allocation motion, an interesting motion that was moved the other day. Do members remember that one? It struck me as strange because this one sort of has been put off into abeyance. Why will the Liberal House leader not simply send a page over with a message that he is going to withdraw this motion so we can start talking about Bill 68? Why will he not simply do that?

1630

In any event, there was a motion made on behalf of the Liberal House leader the other day that the daily hours of meeting of the House be extended from 6 pm to 12 midnight on each sessional day following the adoption of this order up to and including Thursday 3 May 1990. That motion is still being debated too.

See how thoroughly disinterested the Liberals are in talking about Bill 68? They want to clog up the process with all their motions. We were not even finished debating this crummy time allocation motion, and the Liberals moved yet another one. They will not even let us finish debating this because this is held in abeyance and they want to switch back to the time allocation motion. What gives, Mr Speaker? What kind of scam are the Liberals here at Queen's Park running anyway?

The Acting Speaker: I do not like "scam."

Mr Kormos: Scam? Sham, Mr Speaker, sham. Scummy sham.

I want to talk about a message I got from one Herb Alexander. He had visited his MPP, who happens to be the Minister of Health, right here at Queen's Park. Mr Alexander wrote to the minister a letter confirming that meeting and thanking her for taking the time to see him. In that letter, dated 30 March 1990, confirming the meeting, he started out in his conversation with the minister by saying that he only wanted to present to her his thoughts on the government's intended action regarding automobile insurance and that he did not expect the minister to defend the government's position; he merely wanted to be heard out.

He writes in his letter confirming that meeting with the minister that the minister indeed made several statements. These were some of the comments that are representative of this government made to Mr Alexander. They betray the real lack of design on the part of the Liberals here at Queen's Park and reveal why they are so thoroughly uninterested in debating Bill 68 but rather want to hide behind time allocation motions.

Mr Alexander writes in his confirming letter to the minister, a copy of which I am referring to now, with respect to the licensing of 16-year-olds. He has some concerns about the licensing of new young drivers here in the province of Ontario and their impact on collision rates, accidents and personal injuries. He writes in his confirming letter that when it came down to talking about 16-year-olds and the standards that were expected of them before they are put behind the wheels of 3,000- or 4,000-pound cars, the sense of the minister's position was that all the other kids did it.

When Mr Alexander raised with the minister the arbitrary cutoff in the wage replacement scheme, which prohibits people from looking to the negligent party, the reckless party, the careless party, the drunk driver, prohibits innocent injured victims from looking to those wrongdoers for full wage compensation, he points out to the minister in his letter to her that she was silent on the point of those individuals who would be penalized by Bill 68.

When Mr Alexander raised Mr Justice Osborne's inquiry with the Minister of Health, the member for Oriole, he writes in a confirming letter to her that the minister dismissed it as one person's opinion. With respect to Quebec's experience of greater claims following the introduction of no-fault, Mr Alexander's member of this Legislative Assembly made no comment.

With respect to Mr Alexander's understanding that premium claims are merely a symptom, that the real problem was bad driving, which results in claims which force up premiums, with that proposal, he writes, the minister boldly disagreed. With regard to the government having been in his words "bilked" by sharp practices relating to manipulative insurance premiums, Mr Alexander writes, the minister, his member of the provincial Legislature, had no comment.

Mr Alexander asked the minister in his letter confirming this meeting with her to note that he is not a member of any political party, that he is not a member of the legal profession. Indeed, you might enjoy this, Mr Speaker, Mr Alexander writes, "and just for the record, I am not a member of any political party." In his view: "For all practical purposes, they are all the same. Nor am I in or near the legal profession." He writes, "I firmly believe that a large part of the ills of society are due to there being too many lawyers in government, the dumb leading the blind."

Then Mr Alexander, who clearly has no axe to grind, who has no agenda of his own, writes in his letter to the minister that he forgot to give her an opportunity to comment on the con-

tribution to safer driving that will result from the government permitting larger and more frequent ads for alcoholic beverages. That is what happened just a couple of weeks ago, is it not? Just a couple of weeks ago, the Liberals here at Queen's Park relaxed the guidelines for liquor advertising here in the province of Ontario, guidelines that really had been in effect for but a few short years.

Just as the Liberals are prepared to sell out the public of Ontario lock, stock and barrel in favour of the auto insurance industry, it seems that the strength, the power, the control of the liquor and beer industry in Ontario are sufficient that the interests of the public in Ontario will similarly be exchanged by the Liberals here at Queen's Park for the financial welfare of those same liquor manufacturers.

Mr Brown, when he called me this morning, as I explained to you, expressed concern about the out-of-province motorist, that is to say, the driver who is an Ontario driver with Ontario plates and Ontario insurance, who, for instance, in the case of many seniors, wants to travel to Florida. Mr Brown expressed concern that that had not been discussed by us during the course of our discussions so far about this time allocation motion. I explained to him that we had, some days ago, when we were talking about Mr Justice Haines's critique.

Just as Mr Demeo from Thunder Bay, in writing to us about Mrs MacNeil, the nurse who has been denied her no-fault benefits by her insurer—as an aside, the Liberals here, the Minister of Financial Institutions and his parliamentary assistant, the member for Guelph, have been persistent in their claim that when you have first-party insurers, those insurers will treat their insureds oh, so much better, so they will not lose them as customers.

1640

Well, the member for Guelph, the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions might give Co-operators a call because it seems Co-operators has not got the message. It is their own insured, Mrs MacNeil, who is being treated so shabbily by Co-operators, her own insurer. And nothing is going to change, because insurance companies are still going to operate by the golden rule, and that is, when it comes to insurance companies, he who has the gold makes the rules.

The Minister of Financial Institutions and the Premier of Ontario could not care less for the welfare and the wellbeing of drivers, innocent injured victims and taxpayers. Rather, they want to force legislation through this assembly which condemns those same taxpayers, innocent injured victims and drivers and generates profits never before dreamed of for the auto insurance industry. That is why they do not want to debate it.

Fred Brown this morning expressed concern, as a senior, about the impact of Bill 68 on seniors who are driving outside of Ontario, driving south, for instance. That is specifically a matter the Liberals have avoided in any of the discussions so far about Bill 68. They received the letter from Mr Justice Haines. The Minister of Financial Institutions got it back in the first week and a half of January 1990. Mr Justice Haines writes on page 6 of that letter that the "legislation ends car owner and occupant's liability for actions brought in Ontario for bodily injury occurring anywhere in Canada and the United States."

Mr Justice Haines raised this with the Minister of Financial Institutions back in January. He said:

"You"—as the minister—"must be aware that more than a million Ontarians travel by car to vacation throughout this continent. Many of them, particularly senior citizens, seek respite from our harsh winter climate and live away for several months

at a time. They may own property in Florida and elsewhere in the United States. If these persons are involved in accidents beyond Ontario and judgements are obtained against them outside the province, what insurance protection are they to have? Are foreign judgements to haunt them when they step out of Ontario? Are their assets outside the province to be seized and sold in execution? Are they to pay an additional premium for a protection which insurance policies currently"—pre-Bill 68—"provide?"

Back in January 1990, this question was asked of the Minister of Financial Institutions. It was asked of the parliamentary assistant, the member for Guelph, in Windsor. With a shrug and a "huh," it was not responded to. The issue was not dealt with either in January or subsequent to that in Windsor. The Liberals do not want to have to respond at all because that is what time allocation is all about. It is about the Liberals not having to participate in a debate about those most important issues; about the Liberals running from debate; about the Liberals running from the reality of their legislation; about the Liberals wanting to use their majority to override some long-standing rules of procedure.

It is just not fair, is it? It is not fair to the people of Ontario, never mind to the members of the opposition. It is not fair to the drivers in Ontario who are going to face premium increases of up to 50 per cent, and in the instance of almost a third of a million, premium increases of up to 80 per cent. It is not fair to the taxpayers who are going to be gouged to the tune of another \$141 million, \$142 million or perhaps \$143 million in the first year alone, so that these Liberals can subsidize their friends in the insurance industry. It is not fair to the taxpayers and it is not fair to the innocent injured victims.

It is not fair to the innocent injured victims of the drunks, the careless drivers, the reckless drivers and the negligent drivers, the innocent injured victims, 95 per cent of whom will be denied any compensation, will not receive a penny in compensation for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life. It is not just unfair to the opposition. Were it only us, perhaps the argument could not be made as strongly. More important, it is not fair to the drivers of Ontario, it is not fair to the taxpayers of Ontario and it is not fair to the innocent injured victims.

Let me tell you, Mr Speaker, we are eager to debate these issues. We are eager to see a full discussion of Bill 68. We in the New Democratic Party are eager to have an opportunity to question the Minister of Financial Institutions about the impact of Bill 68 on drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims. We simply do not find it acceptable that 95 per cent of innocent injured victims will be denied any compensation for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life. We simply do not find it acceptable that those same people will be denied access to a courtroom to enforce those rights.

Quite frankly, the insurance industry is the party with the greatest interest in making sure that people do not have, that innocent injured victims do not have, legal representation. The insurance industry would like very much to deal directly with those victims, just as Co-operators wants to deal directly with Mrs MacNeil up in Thunder Bay. Look what happened to her, Mr Speaker. Her no-fault benefits were denied arbitrarily. She was stripped of that right by her own insurer whom she took at face value initially, whom she listened to in good faith.

1650

I am disappointed. I have a note here from my office up in the north wing indicating that we have had 30 calls in the last 48 minutes, 30 telephone calls of support for our position on

this issue, and that neither the Premier's office nor the parliamentary assistant's office is accepting collect phone calls. I'll be darned. The Premier of Ontario and the member for Guelph, it appears, are not interested in listening to the people of Ontario, people in Ontario who would take the time to attempt to communicate to people who are having a significant effect on their lives, the lives of their children, the lives of their grandchildren, by virtue of Bill 68. The Premier and the parliamentary assistant, the member for Guelph, do not want to accept phone calls from those people who take the time and the interest to let them know that Bill 68, in the eyes of the public of Ontario, simply will not fly.

I thank those people. Again, I think this is important. It is important to note the attention that is being paid to this issue across the province, because this is such a contentious piece of legislation and one about which the public in Ontario has had no hesitation in expressing its strong disapproval. It surely warrants lengthier and more thorough debate than what the Liberals are prepared to give it in two scant afternoons for the purpose of committee of the whole House.

The fact that people are using their phones should be something of a premonition because those same people, you can bet your boots, Mr Speaker, are going to be prepared to use their ballots come a general election. Again, it would be so simple for the government to show the courage that it has lacked so far and say, "Okay, let's have an election in Ontario and let Bill 68 be one of the issues." We are talking about a government which shows disdain for the public in Ontario, disdain for the rules of this House.

Mr Speaker, let me tell you how pathetic the Liberals' lack of control over Bill 68 has been.

Mr Faubert: Do you ever say anything new? What else have you got to say?

Mr Laughren: We want to know how pathetic you really are, Frank. Dave Warner knows. That's why he's out knocking on doors. While you're sitting in here, he's out knocking on doors.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please, the member for Nickel Belt, the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere.

Mr Kormos: Perhaps a page could come up here. The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere is acting childish. Perhaps he ought to have a colouring book and some crayons. Would the page take that over to the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere? He wants to do some colouring.

Mr Faubert: Send it back to him.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: This has got to stop. I cannot keep on providing toys for the Liberal members to play with.

Miss Roberts: Then yield the floor and let us speak.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: Surely some day care facilities can be provided for people like the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere.

Mr Callahan: You're really getting to the public out there with your colouring books.

Mr Faubert: They've all turned on The Young and the Restless.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: I am telling him those crayons have got to last at least two weeks. You put them back in the box when you are finished with them, okay, member for Scarborough-Ellesmere?

The Deputy Speaker: The member will address the Speaker and will remain on topic.

Mr Kormos: Yes, Mr Speaker. Oh my, he coloured that so quickly.

Talking about the regulations to Bill 68, in particular I have been provided with two editions of the same section 14 of those regulations. The notation is attached to the original and current versions of section 14 of the regulations. Section 14 created the obligation on the insurers to pay weekly benefits regardless of any dispute over entitlement. It sounded straightforward enough, did it not? It was a much-touted cornerstone of the legislation that this would force the payment of benefits and deal with the sharp criticism of the current system levelled by Mr Justice Osborne. That is the report that the Liberals refused to read.

Listen carefully to this one, Mr Speaker. This one will curl your hair. The Liberals have quietly scrapped a cornerstone of the plan. The obligation to pay pending dispute resolution is gone. Remember I talked about legerdemain a few moments ago? Here it is again. It is, "Now you see it, now you don't"; a little bit of the old pea-and-shell game again. The Liberals have quietly scrapped what they touted as a cornerstone of the plan. The obligation to pay pending dispute resolution is gone.

That is exactly why the Minister of Financial Institutions and the Premier do not want to have a debate about Bill 68. It is exactly why the member for Guelph does not want to engage in a debate about Bill 68. They want to keep on playing their little pea-and-shell game. The problem with that position, though, is that the public in Ontario has had it. The public in Ontario is as mad as hell and just will not take it any more.

I am so disappointed that the Premier, at his constituency office, will not accept people's phone calls; I am so disappointed that the member for Guelph, at his constituency office, according to the information I have just received, will not accept collect phone calls. He wants to gouge the public in Ontario one more time. Perhaps they would like to call the Premier here at Queen's Park.

We talked a few moments ago about how so many of us miss the bell-ringing. Again, it was a phenomenon that was taken away by the Liberal majority.

Mr Faubert: You negotiated out of it.

Mr Kormos: It was taken away by the Liberal majority.

Mr Faubert: That is a crock and you know it.

Mr Kormos: They showed arrogance and superciliousness that are unparalleled.

Mr Callahan: How about misleading the Legislature? That's what you're doing.

Mr Kormos: Ignore him, Mr Speaker. I don't mind.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: I want to hear some bell-ringing around here again, I want to hear the bells ring, so if people would like to call the Premier's office here at Queen's Park to let him and his staff know what they think of Bill 68, they can do it by calling 965-1941. Of course, it is in Toronto so it is area code 416. I can hear the phone ringing now. It is remarkable. We want to hear that phone ring and ring. I want the Premier's staff to be

answering that phone just every second of the working day. The Premier may not want to accept collect calls at his constituency office, but we are talking about a big province.

I think people from across the north should be calling the Premier's office collect. I think the people from northern Ontario should be phoning the Premier here at Queen's Park. It is area code 416 and the number is 965-1941. So I think people from the Timmins area, right here, should get on their phones and call collect to the Premier of Ontario here at Queen's Park by calling 416-965-1941, making those bells ring in a way that makes us all a little bit nostalgic. The Liberals with their arrogant majority can take away the rights of the opposition, but they cannot take away the rights of the public of Ontario to pester the daylights out of the Premier of the province, to pester the daylights out of the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions, the member for Guelph, to pester the daylights out of the Minister of Financial Institutions and to let those actors know that the people in Ontario just will not tolerate Bill 68.

1700

Down in the heart of the Niagara Peninsula, in Welland-Thorold, people down there know what Bill 68 is all about. It is all about real bad legislation. It is all about legislation that is going to make drivers in Ontario pay premium increases of as much as 50 per cent and, for a third of a million of the drivers in Ontario, by up to 80 per cent. People from Welland-Thorold know that is not the fulfilment of the promise that the Premier made back in 1987.

Members know the promise, right, the big promise, the big Premier Peterson promise? That is that he had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums. The people down in Welland-Thorold waited and waited. They waited and they waited for that very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums. What did they get? They are getting Bill 68. They are getting a scheme that is going to jack up premiums, for at least a third of a million drivers here in the province of Ontario, by up to 80 per cent and for the rest of them by as much as 50 per cent. Do members call that a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums? I call it bullfeathers.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that part of the time allocation debate?

Mr Kormos: You bet your boots it is, Mr Speaker, and let me tell you this: It is exactly because of the failure to keep that promise that the Premier, the Minister of Financial Institutions and the member for Guelph want to impose this time allocation on us. It is because of the Premier's inability, his refusal, to keep his promise that he had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums. It is very much because of that that the Premier does not want to see full debate about Bill 68. That is a promise that was not kept, and it is a promise by the Premier that has been characterized in a number of ways by a number of people. There are people here in the Legislature who have been here a lot longer than I have, Mr Speaker, who recall the litany of broken promises, and I know you remember them too.

Mr Speaker, you know that one of the things we have done in the course of this discussion is to talk about how important it is to people across Ontario. These are the messages that we have received here at Queen's Park in the last hour. The message I got was, "Phone's ringing off the hook." That is fine, I do not mind talking to the people of Ontario; we in the New Democratic Party are pleased to hear from the people of Ontario.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: Some of those same people who feel comfortable calling New Democrats, because they know that New Democrats will listen, I want those same people to try calling the Premier's office. Please, right now. Area code 416, 965-1941. You call and, if you are from out of Toronto, you call collect.

By gosh, if you are from Orillia, you call collect to the Premier of Ontario, right here at Queen's Park, right now this afternoon. You call 416—that is the area code—and then the Premier's number is 965-1941. Because hearing those bells ring is going to be a nostalgic moment for all of us. So I want people, the good people who called and left messages at my office, to call the Premier. Area code 416, 965-1941. And call collect if you are out of town.

Listen, those same people should not take any guff from the staff. The Premier is here this afternoon, I am sure of it. I am pretty sure he is right here. So they should not take any excuses about the Premier being busy, about the Premier being unavailable. If somebody says the Premier is out to lunch, that you can believe. But other than that, the people who call the Premier at 965-1941, you get to talk to the Premier personally. He is your Premier and you get to tell him personally what you think of him and the Liberals and Bill 68, and what you think of the Liberals trying to muzzle democracy here at Queen's Park.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Quite right. If the Premier is in a meeting, it is undoubtedly with the board of directors of any number of auto insurance companies here in the province of Ontario which are pulling his strings again.

Mr Callahan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: This member has consistently referred motives to members of this Legislature, which is contrary to the standing orders, section 19.

Mr D. S. Cooke: No, it is changed; it is 23(i).

Mr Callahan: I thank the member. Not only does it offend the rules; it demeans the member in making those statements in this House, any honourable members of this House. I would ask you, as Speaker, to rule that he desist and not do that again.

The Deputy Speaker: The member will be more careful and will use parliamentary language.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Once again, I appreciate your guidance and I appreciate the attention that the member pays to my comments. I welcome that type of constructive criticism.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Nickel Belt will also be more careful with his parliamentary language.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate that.

One of the considerations that we have always had during the course of this discussion is the significance of Bill 68 to the people in Ontario. That is surely a consideration that has to be made about whether or not time allocation is appropriate, and that is what we are talking about now. Let me give an example of the type of attention that is being paid to this, that cries out for full debate.

Matt Napier from Curry Avenue in Windsor called in. He is not in a New Democrat's riding. He is in a Liberal cabinet

minister's riding, but he says he will never vote Liberal again. He wants a flyer and a button and he is going to get them.

Maurice Buzit from Catalina Drive in Stoney Creek phoned in this afternoon with, "Congratulations, keep up the good work." This is illustrative of how important this is to people across Ontario.

Joseph Camilleri from Brampton phoned in. He has never done it before but he says this time, because of the auto insurance legislation, he is voting NDP, and as far as he knows, his wife and his kids are voting NDP too. So Joseph Camilleri from Brampton is paying attention and this issue is significant to him and his family.

1710

Beverly Brown from Pelham Avenue in Toronto: Mrs Brown phones in and she says Bill 68 scares her and her family to death, with the danger it poses for drivers and taxpayers and innocent injured victims. So Beverly Brown wants a button and a flyer and she is going to get a "No-fault, No Thanks" button. She is also going to get the FAIR tabloid, the one that outlines the results of the survey that the Committee for Fair Action in Insurance Reform undertook here in the province of Ontario, which showed that the vast majority of people in Ontario oppose Bill 68.

Vince Farrow phones from Owen Sound. He says he has been watching for three weeks. He has been watching since 3 April, the beginning of this time allocation debate. He wants a button and a flyer, and he is going to get one. He encourages us to keep on fighting this bad legislation. Well, thank you, Mr Farrow in Owen Sound.

Eleanor Tremblay from Victoria Park in Toronto phoned in this afternoon saying that she hopes they get rid of the closure motion, because this issue needs more discussion.

People are paying attention out there. They want to see Bill 68 debated. They want to see questions put to the Minister of Financial Institutions. They want to see him accept responsibility for the havoc that Bill 68 is going to wreak on drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims.

Here is a call from B. Showers in Paris, Ontario. He phones in with support for what we are doing in the opposition. He asked, "Do Liberal members not have families who are going to be subjected to Bill 68 also?" He is worried about the impact of an out-of-jurisdiction accident, just like Fred Brown was from Scarborough, just like Mr Demeo, the lawyer from Thunder Bay, just like Mr Justice Haines was back in his 8 January 1990 letter to the Minister of Financial Institutions. To B. Showers from Paris, again, thank you.

Gary Cockram from Kitchener phones. He totally disagrees with the inability to sue, with the denial of the right to use the courts to obtain relief. He questions, "Isn't it unconstitutional?" Well, Mr Cockram from Kitchener knows that a whole lot of very competent lawyers and legal minds have already warned the Premier of this province and his Minister of Financial Institutions, and they have warned the Liberal House leader, about the prospect of constitutional challenges to the threshold, and again, the pain and expense that is going to create for so many people.

Frank Chiarelli from St Catharines fully supports our opposition to Bill 68, and to Frank Chiarelli from St Catharines I appreciate the attention he is giving.

Once again, these are important people. These are people across Ontario who are paying attention to what is happening here, who are taking the time to phone with their comments.

These are the people the Liberals in Ontario do not want to listen to and do not want to be confronted by.

All I ask is that these same people phone the Premier of Ontario right here at Queen's Park at 965-1941, area code 416, because that is in Toronto at Queen's Park; 965-1941. Call collect if you are outside Toronto. It is the Premier of Ontario. Surely the Premier of Ontario would want to hear your views about Bill 68. Is that not fair, Mr Speaker?

Gregory Ellwood from Windsor called in. He said everyone he talks to is opposed to Bill 68. He does not like the closure motion and no-fault. He does not like that at all. Greg Ellwood from Windsor knows what the Liberals are doing here at Queen's Park is undemocratic, and the message he has given is that this closure motion has got to be defeated or withdrawn by the Liberal House leader, so that we can start talking about Bill 68.

Volkmar Schedereit from Shaughnessy Boulevard in Willowdale. He knows that among other people, people in the cab industry are going to pay dearly. He says that what we are doing in the opposition, trying to defeat Bill 68, is fantastic and that we should be doing it all the way, as far as we can.

Mr Laughren: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I wonder if you could check to see whether or not we have a quorum on this important debate.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Mr Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1716

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum being present, the member for Welland-Thorold may proceed.

Mr Kormos: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity.

Mrs Enid Parks from Briar Hill Avenue in Toronto: She does not drive but she is scared out of her wits by Bill 68 anyway. She knows that even though she does not drive she is going to pay as a taxpayer, that she is going to pay to subsidize with taxpayers' money a very powerful and wealthy auto insurance industry. She knows that even though she is not a driver she could become an innocent victim, and that as an innocent victim she could well be among those 95 per cent of all innocent victims who are being deprived of their right to be compensated for pain and suffering and loss of enjoyment of life. So Mrs Enid Parks wants a FAIR tabloid and a button. She is going to get it, and thank you very much.

These are real people, real Ontarians with real things to say, and this Liberal government is not interested in listening to them. This Liberal government is more interested in selling these people out so that the auto insurance industry in Ontario can become more profitable than it has ever dared dream of.

That is what these Liberals are all about, but these good people are listening and these good people are phoning the Premier's office right now at 965-1941, right here at Queen's Park. The ones who do not live in Toronto are calling collect, as they should. They are not taking any guff from the Premier's staff. They want to talk to their Premier personally.

Hon Mr Ward: Peter, what's your phone number?

Mr Kormos: All these people have my phone number. I gave it earlier today because I want these people to call, and I want them to call the Premier of Ontario. The people who want a FAIR tabloid or a "No-fault, No Thanks" button—until we are out of them; they are going fast. We will give them while they

last, and the FAIR tabloids. I want these people to call me here at Queen's Park at 965-7714, and right after they call me I want them to call the Premier's office. I want them to call Premier, the leader of the Liberal Party in Ontario at 965-1941 and let the Premier know what they think of Bill 68.

Charles Crump from Pickering thinks Bill 68 stinks. He knows Bill 68 should be defeated.

Larry Stirling from Moy Avenue, Windsor, phones and says, "Keep up the good work." He knows Bill 68 should be defeated, and I will bet you dollars to doughnuts right now, Mr Speaker, that people like Mr Stirling are not going to vote for members of a Legislative Assembly who would support Bill 68. I could tell you that right now.

John Thomas phones in from Wiarton and he makes note of the fact that his member is the Minister of Financial Institutions. Well, John Thomas is not very happy at all. John Thomas from Wiarton ain't very happy at all about what his member, the Minister of Financial Institutions, is doing to him, other taxpayers, drivers and innocent injured victims here in the province of Ontario.

Leon Stickle from Church Crescent in Mount Forest called. Once again, he says no to the Liberals' Bill 68 and their insurance scheme.

Robert and Dinah Dickie from Brownlow Avenue in Toronto: This is why we need full debate on Bill 68. This is why this closure motion is just unacceptable to any fairminded person. Mr and Mrs Dickie phone that they have been insured for 35 years and never had an accident. Mr Dickie, now 53, has been with Co-operators. Once again, Co-operators: Remember what they did to Mrs MacNeil up in Thunder Bay? Well, they are doing it to Mr Dickie right here in Toronto. He has been with Co-operators for six years.

His insurance is being increased to \$2,500 a year, a 500 per cent or 600 per cent increase. It is \$2,500 a year. The man has never had an accident and has been insured for 35 years. That is exactly why we have to have full debate about Bill 68 and that is exactly why the Liberals want to run from any debate about Bill 68. That is pretty damnably pathetic

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: C. Sharpe from Oakglade Crescent in Mississauga phones in; again, is opposed to Bill 68 and wants a FAIR tabloid and a "No-fault, No Thanks" button. C. Sharpe is going to get the tabloid and is going to get the button.

Yvonne Pennington phoned and said: "Good job. Keep going. Keep fighting." What she says about the Liberal members here I am not going to repeat in the Legislature because it is, quite frankly, the sort of thing that these youngsters, the pages, should not have to hear at their tender age.

Magdelina Martin from Eva Road in Etobicoke says, "I thank you very much for your comment about me," and she is going to get the button that she asked for.

Mr Callahan: Did your staff go through the phone book? You know they're blank?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, the member for Brampton South.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, there is a member over there who wants his colouring book and crayons, and he is not going to get them until he calms down. He is not behaving very well at all.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Callahan: Are you calling the speaker to order?

The Deputy Speaker: I am calling everybody who is making interjections to order.

Mr Kormos: Carolyn Martin from Eva Road in Etobicoke admires what the opposition is doing about Bill 68. Oh, these are sisters; I bet they are sisters. Here is Magdelina Martin from Eva Road, and yes, same address, and Carolyn Martin. You are both going to get buttons and thank you very much for paying attention. It is people like you who really are the people who safeguard democracy. It is people like you who are going to tell these Liberals that their jackboot tactics, their attempt to muzzle the opposition—it is people like you, Carolyn and Magdelina Martin, who are going to tell these Liberals during the next general election that you, like thousands and hundreds of thousands and millions of others here in the province of Ontario, are not going to put up with that. I tell the Liberals that.

F. M. Windatt from Fenelon Falls called in, once again, to join those thousands and hundreds of thousands of others who say no to Bill 68. F. M. Windatt wants a button and a flyer. Mr Windatt will get a button and a flyer.

Dan Culhane from Linwell Road in St Catharines calls up and says the opposition is doing a good job. Thank you very much to Dan Culhane. More important, are the Liberals listening? People across Ontario are saying no to the closure motion. It is a big province. People across Ontario are saying no to Bill 68. You know what, Mr Speaker? The Liberals are so beholden to the auto insurance industry, they are so deep under the covers with the auto insurance industry—

Mr Callahan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member for Welland-Thorold I think has indicated something which is not true. He says his colleagues support him, but I do not see any of them in the House in support of him.

The Deputy Speaker: That is not a point of order.

Mr Kormos: That warrants some explanation. I appreciate that member for bringing it up. My colleagues are answering the phones in my office. These are people who cannot get through to the Premier's office because the Premier is not taking calls.

Hon Mr Kwinter: How many phones do you have?

Mr Kormos: Well, we have a number of lines and a number of phones. Sadly, my colleagues, who I trust feel quite comfortable with me carrying this stage of the debate, are busy in my office up in the north wing answering those calls. People out there have got to lean on the Premier a little bit. People out there who are listening who call the Premier at 965-1941 have got to be persistent. If they are told that the Premier is not available for them one minute, they call back again. That is what they have to do; 965-1941.

If the Premier is unavailable to them, maybe they should ask for the House leader or the whip. You know, the siblings grim? If the Premier is not available to them, these people have got a right to say: "What is going on in this province? Are the only people who can get through on the Premier's telephone line executives from the auto insurance industry? The real people in Ontario cannot." Do members want to know something else? Drivers can vote; insurance companies cannot. The Liberals are going to learn that lesson real well come the next general election.

Lionel Deveau from Sentinel Road in Downsview calls in. That is up near York University where I spent a good chunk of

time. The first time I ever graduated from a school. High school and I did not get along too well, but university and I got along just fine. So I am familiar with the area of Sentinel Road in Downsview. Lionel Deveau calls up to say we are doing a good job. Thank you very much. It is only fair that these people receive some recognition for their contribution. He says, "Keep it up." I tell Mr Deveau we are going to do our very best to make sure that this crummy legislation is defeated.

Fern Pereira from Aylmer Avenue in Ottawa phones this afternoon and says that what we are doing is very admirable. "Keep up the good work." Fern Pereira is 27 years old and is wondering how Bill 68 is going to affect his insurance rates when they come up for renewal. Well, the sad message to Fern Pereira, to this 27-year-old person in Ottawa, is that he risks being among those third of a million people who are going to face premium increases of up to 80 per cent once Bill 68 becomes law if these Liberals ram it through.

Almost a third of a million people, a third of a million drivers here in the province of Ontario are going to suffer premium increases of up to 80 per cent if Bill 68 gets passed. That is number one. Number two, the rest of the drivers in Ontario are going to face premium increases of up to 50 per cent. The Minister of Financial Institutions promised them that a few weeks ago, and that is one promise that minister is going to keep.

1730

So to Fern Pereira, I tell him that Bill 68 means this to him, my friend, as a 27-year-old driver: He is going to pay higher and higher premiums. He is going to pay more and more taxes, and if he ever suffers as an innocent injured victim, he will probably fall into that 95 per cent of them who will not receive a single penny in compensation for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life.

Suzanne Philip is a 46-year-old teacher at Humber College—and she does not look it, I tell you. Her husband sent me a message that says, "Suzanne says keep up the fight. We are behind you all the way." To Suzanne Philip, I thank her and I quite frankly thank her husband. She wants a "No-Fault, No Thanks" button. We will make sure she gets one. I know just who to give it to, to make sure that he takes it to her.

Here is an interesting letter we just got on the fax. The page brought it to me: "18 April 1990. Dear Mr Kormos"—once again, Mr Speaker, it is important to refer to these messages to understand the scope of Bill 68 and how many people it impacts on, but some of the comments again embarrass me because of my modest nature.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: I try to be sort of polite and genteel about this, and all I get are Liberals jumping up and down insisting that I read it all. So be it.

"Dear Mr Kormos:

"You are to be admired for your courage before the Legislature. Your addresses and your strategies have been brilliant. The people of Ontario will be grateful if you are able to defeat the machiavellian legislation proposed in Bill 68. There is a large segment of the population which understands that the government has not been truthful with regard to the proposed legislation; has, by the sin of omission, been guilty of misrepresentation; has failed to acknowledge the windfall to the insurance companies and the increased cost to government and the taxpayers which the proposed legislation will entail.

"It was merely yesterday that I read in the newspaper that Mr Peterson has stated that the proposed legislation has fulfilled his promise, made at the time of the last election, that he had a plan to reduce insurance premiums."

How could the Premier say that? How could the Premier say that Bill 68, which is going to promise premium increases of up to 50 per cent for most drivers and, for a third of a million drivers, premium increases of up to 80 per cent, fulfils his promise to provide a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums? Somebody's nose is growing. How can the Premier say that? How can his Liberal caucus let him say those sorts of things?

"If he had a plan, why did he have the hearings? Was this all a sham at the taxpayers' expense, or did he not have a plan at all? Were the committee hearings also a sham? Keep up the fight. If it were not for members such as yourself, the legislative process would be in even greater distress than it is today."

That is from Mr Levinter. Again, I thank Mr Levinter for taking the time to send that. I appreciate the encouragement. I tell people it is important to this debate about closure that they reveal, that they display to this assembly how significant Bill 68 is for every person in the province. It is important, when we are talking about this closure motion, that people in Ontario make their voices heard and they let the members of this assembly know that closure motions are unacceptable because the significance of Bill 68 is just too great.

There are a few more messages. T. Friend—what a great name—from Glengarry Avenue in Toronto, phones in and says no to Bill 68 and wants a FAIR tabloid. Mr or Ms Friend, whichever, sir or madam, T. Friend is going to get a FAIR tabloid. Again, I thank T. Friend from Glengarry Avenue in Toronto for phoning in.

Arlene Roussou from Windsor calls in. I thank Arlene very much once again. She congratulates the opposition. She wants a button and tabloid. Arlene Roussou will get a button and a tabloid.

Jim Freeman from Oxford Street in Oshawa calls in to say no to Bill 68, to say no to time allocation. Jim Freeman calls in to say to the Liberals, "This just won't fly."

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Only one member has the right to speak in the House at this very moment.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I tell you, your job and your task is not an easy one. I admire the Speaker and I think it is timely that we pay tribute to you for your patience and your tolerance with some very rude and dumb members of the Liberal caucus. They have tested your patience, I know that, but you have conducted yourself admirably and I admire you.

If members of the Liberal caucus, those members who insist on following the insurance companies' orders, had some of your character, some of your integrity and some of your ability to analyse issues, we would not have to be arguing this debate right now. Thank you. I respect you and admire you and I have an affection for you that it is important to express. I share that with you, Mr Speaker, respect and affection.

H. Harrison from Findlay Boulevard in Downsview is a senior citizen. Mr Harrison, thank you. You are welcome to call my office any time. Try the Premier at 965-1941.

The Deputy Speaker: The member will address the Speaker only.

Mr Kormos: Of course, sir. Thank you. But H. Harrison from Downsview agrees with everything we are saying. He is a

senior citizen. He just experienced a 23 per cent increase in premiums. So much for the Liberal freeze and the Liberal cap. That meant diddly-squat in the real world. The insurance companies spent no more than a day figuring out how to weave around that little so-called restriction. The Liberals' regulatory process has about as much teeth as my old toothless beagle, Charlie, who is risking being neutered, as the members well know.

Mr Harrison admits that he voted Liberal before but he is disgusted with this government. I have a feeling that some Liberal candidate up in Downsview is going to be hard-pressed to get Mr Harrison's support next general election. Do the members not think so? I bet them. They better believe it.

Connie White from Cobalt, Ontario phones in, "Keep up the good work." She admires what the opposition is doing. She says, "The Liberals are walking all over the citizens of Ontario." Ms White should call the Premier's office at (416)965-1941. Connie White from Cobalt and others like her should call collect and should not take any guff from the Premier's staff. Dam it, he is their Premier.

He is the one who got us into this mess. He should be prepared to talk to these people himself, with none of this special assistant, this secretary, this "my colleague" stuff. The Premier himself should be talking to these people, because they have something to say to the Premier of Ontario and, dam it, he had better listen, Mr Speaker. I will tell you that because he spent enough time listening to the auto insurance companies, did he not?

He has done their bidding for too long. The Premier of Ontario had better start listening to the people of Ontario or he had better start thinking about retirement plans himself. That is it in a nutshell.

Emmerson Greer from Sarnia congratulates the opposition on our role in Bill 68. He does not believe in any of the Premier's promises. He says, "The Liberal government is nothing but"—could I have a page, please?

1740

Would the page show the Speaker that—I am not sure whether I should say what is written there—just so he can vet it for me and see what that fine man from Sarnia has to say about this Liberal government.

Mr Callahan: He does not have the same privilege you have. You can libel people in here and get away with it.

Mr Kormos: Oh, my. There you go, Mr Speaker. Perhaps I could have that back now from the page. Fine, I will not read the complete message. But let me tell you what Emmerson Greer from Sarnia—what he writes here we agree with entirely.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: It is getting somewhat raucous in here, is it not? I think we are touching a nerve here. We are getting close here.

Mr Callahan: Hide behind privilege in here. Let's see you say it outside.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please, the member for Brampton South.

Mr Kormos: There are some Liberal members who are getting frenetic. They have every good reason to be upset. They have sold out the drivers, the taxpayers and the injured victims of Ontario in favour of the insurance companies.

Mr Callahan: Why don't you go out and give a press conference? Stand there and lie to the public.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please, the member for Brampton South.

Mr Kormos: They think they have friends in the insurance companies. The insurance companies will throw these crumbs to the dogs quick as a boo. Some day during the course of this discussion we have to chart out which of these Liberal members ain't coming back here and which are, because we are talking about a good 25 or 30 who are goners come the next general election, just no two ways about it.

In any event, the time allocation motion is what we are talking about. People like Neil Maycock from Bowmanville think the opposition is doing a magnificent job. He supports the opposition. Neil Maycock in Bowmanville says no to Bill 68. These Liberals are ready to do the bidding of the insurance industry. They are ready to listen to the insurance industry.

If people, when they called the Premier's number, 965-1941, told the receptionist that they were from the Co-operators or Allstate or any other number of auto insurance companies, I bet they would get put through right away. Some people should try that just as a little bit of an experiment, because I bet if the president of Allstate calls the Premier's office, the Premier is on that phone quick as a boo. It would be an interesting experiment.

Ross Battle, 17 McNaughton Road in Welland, wants a button and a flyer and he says no way to no-fault. I tell him, I appreciate his calling and look forward to the next time we have an opportunity to chat.

Frank Spry from Windsor needs 30 buttons and 30 flyers. I am sorry. Mr Spry surely has to understand that we are running short on buttons. We will get him as many as we can, but Frank Spry from Windsor says no way to no-fault.

Mike Vincent from Aspenwood Drive in North York says no way to no-fault.

Ron Broughton, 457 East Main Street in Welland—and Ron and I, quite frankly—

Mr Callahan: A new strategy, eh? Keep those cards and letters coming.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: What a remarkable display we have had this afternoon of the unwillingness of the Liberals to hear from the people of Ontario. It is not hyperbole when I suggest to the House that the next thing for these Liberals to do may be just to lock the doors and not bother using this chamber any more at all. The Liberals' disdain and disrespect for democracy is no longer subtle; it has reached high, new proportions. We will have to see what the Premier, at 965-1941, might say about that. Again, people should be calling him collect.

Anyway, Ron Broughton in Welland, I appreciate your comments. We will give you a flyer and a button. To Ron Broughton we say, "Take care," and we thank him, like so many thousands and thousands of other people, for paying attention. Max Murray, from Danforth Avenue in Toronto, says no way to the Liberals' Bill 68. He has had it. He does not want a government that will sell him out in favour of the auto insurance industry.

Here is the last phone message I have right now. I do not know whether my office will have a chance to bring more down or not, but Mr Heads, an insurance broker here in Toronto, says that Bill 68 is only about making more money for the insurance industry.

Mr Callahan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Could I inquire under the rules what this has to do with the motion that is presently before this House? Perhaps in fairness we should ask the people of this province to call Mr Kormos collect at 732-6884 or fax 732-9782 and see if he takes collect calls.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member will continue and address the motion.

Mr Kormos: Of course, Mr Speaker. That is exactly what we are doing. It is worthy of remark to point out that once again we have really got the Liberals going this afternoon. These guys are just hopping. These guys are as nervous as a cat on a hot tin roof.

Do you know what happened, Mr Speaker? Some of these Liberals, the ones who can read, read their newspapers this morning, and in at least one of those newspaper articles was a suggestion that maybe our participation in this debate was going to end today. The surprise is this: No, our participation in this debate is not going to end today and it ain't going to end tomorrow, so members should stick around. There is a whole lot more to talk about before we are finished this debate about this crummy motion, about muzzling the opposition, about marching jackboots through Queen's Park, about showing disdain for the rights of people across Ontario.

One of the considerations in talking about the time allocation motion is the significance it has to people across the province. That is to say that a trivial matter would not require—here are some more phone messages. Mr Heads is an insurance broker here in Toronto. He thinks Bill 68 is a dumb proposal too, because he knows that it has nothing to do with fairness and that all it has to do with is more and bigger profits for the auto insurance industry.

Insurance brokers are really special people. They perform a difficult task at the best of times, because they are as much victims of the insurance industry as anybody else is. That is why later on during the course of this debate, when we talk about how public, driver-owned, non-profit auto insurance, like in British Columbia, could address some of the real issues here in the province about the crisis in insurance, we are going to talk about how brokers fare in that sort of system and how welcome brokers are in a public scheme.

Mr Callahan: Can we see the pink sheets, Peter? We want to see these lists they are on. Come on, fess up. You know they are all NDPers.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: Flora LeMire from Park Lane in Kincardine called in to say no to no-fault. She said she used to be a Liberal but she will not vote Liberal again, not after she has seen this display by these Liberals. The sad thing is that her daughter, her little girl Delage, was five years old when she was struck as an innocent injured victim by a driver last summer in the park.

Her daughter, with a fracture in the right foot, had to be inactive for a year. That little girl would not receive a penny; if Bill 68 were passed, Flora Lemire's daughter in Kincardine, that little girl, that innocent five-year-old victim struck by a negligent driver, with a fractured foot, would not receive a penny.

1750

Mr Curling: On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Under which standing order?

Mr Curling: Is it in order for someone to receive his telephone messages in the House and read them in the House?

The Deputy Speaker: Address the motion, please.

Mr Kormos: Yes, thank you, sir. Your silence spoke volumes about that last point of order.

Here are some more messages. Brant Fudge at 28 Demaris Avenue here in Downsview—

Mr J. B. Nixon: Peter, your constituency office is closed and it doesn't take messages.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: He is a student. He says no to Bill 68, and because of our opposition to Bill 68 he is going to be voting NDP for the first time. I tell Brant Fudge in Downsview that we are not afraid to talk to people like you and and your friends and other students and seniors and workers and small business people. We are not afraid to listen to those constituents across Ontario.

Gord Bowes from Palmer Road in Belleville phoned in with his support. His mother lives in Welland. It is good to hear, of course, from Gord Bowes in Belleville. I appreciate his attention. That illustrates how widespread the concern is about this time allocation motion. These people are crying out for a debate, for a complete, thorough debate.

Nancy Bortnik in Toronto made a call to the Premier in Queen's Park.

Mr Callahan: Why are you spelling it out? We would like to see those sheets. Come on. Send them over.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: Her message is, having made that call to the Premier's office, she ain't ever going to vote Liberal again. So Nancy Bortnik is paying attention.

George Brown in Toronto, from Pelham Avenue, is another one of those thousands and thousands, tens and hundreds of thousands of people across Ontario who phoned in to say that he agrees with what the opposition is doing. He says no to Bill 68, no to the Liberals's auto insurance scheme.

Dave Alexander from Capri Street in Thorold says this—

Mr Callahan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Which standing order?

Mr Callahan: The standing order is 23(b)(i). If the member continues to direct his speech to other than the motion before the House, I would like, as I am sure other members of the House would like, to see those pink slips, so that we can return the calls if the member is not going to return them. We would like to see them. I think the House has a right under Beauchesne's rulings to have every piece of paper that is supplied by a member in this House.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Wildman: Mr Speaker, we would be happy to give them pink slips.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member for Welland-Thorold will address strictly the motion.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker. You know, Mr Speaker, we have a member over there—

Mr Callahan: If they were legitimate, you would be happy to send them over, Kormos. You're a fake, a total fake.

Mr Fleet: You're about as effective before the Speaker as you were before the courts.

Mr Philip: There used to be a good chairman of the standing committee on regulations and so forth. What happened to him?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member for Etobicoke-Rexdale, the member for High Park-Swansea.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Lambton.

Mr Philip: David, how come you lost your job to him?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please, the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale.

Mr Philip: Yes, sir.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Lambton. Order, please. The member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos: Once again, we are getting close here. I am just overwhelmed by the response of the Liberal members. You know, Mr Speaker, it is important to know—once again, that is why I am reading these messages—how widespread the concern is about Bill 68 and the time allocation motion.

The member for—I keep forgetting his riding because, after all, he does not speak that much in the Legislature—the member for Brampton South is just the sort of person who does not make much of an impact on the Legislature. In any event, people like George Brown in Toronto, Robert and Dinah Dickie in Toronto, Leon Stickle in Mount Forest, John Thomas in Wiarton, Larry Stirling in Windsor, Charles Crump in Pickering, Enid Parks in Toronto, Volkmar Schedereit in Willowdale—

Mr Callahan: Send the sheets over, Peter, Come on. If they are legitimate, send them over.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: —Greg Ellwood in Windsor, Frank Chiarelli in St Catharines—

Mr Callahan: You are afraid to give them to us. They are phoney numbers. Other than that, they are partisan numbers.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. It would be nice if we could finish the few minutes left respecting the standing orders.

Mr Kormos: Gary Cockram in Kitchener, B. Showers in Paris, Eleanor Tremblay in Toronto, Vince Farrow in Owen Sound, Beverly Brown in Toronto, Joseph Camilleri in Brampton. These are not fictitious people. These are real people in the real world. These are the sort of people that the Liberals do not want to listen to. These are the sort of people that the Liberals will sell out so that the Liberals can benefit their bed-mates in the auto insurance industry.

Dave Alexander from Capri Street called in from Thorold. I appreciate the call from Dave Alexander, Mr Speaker, and you will too when you hear what he had to say. He said, “Between the Liberals and Bill 68 and the Conservatives and the GST, thanks for fighting for the little guys and keeping people off welfare.” To Dave Alexander, we appreciate that, and I know you do, Mr Speaker.

Steve Vance in Barrie—it is exactly because of what Steve Vance in Barrie has got to say that these Liberals, the Minister of Financial Institutions, the member for Guelph and the Premier, precisely because of what is contained in this message that they do not want to debate Bill 68. Steve Vance from Grove Street in Barrie says he is a card-carrying Liberal. His wife and he are just starting out with insurance premiums of \$3,000 for two vehicles. A 50 per cent increase is going to leave them with a premium bill per year of some \$4,500. That is a lot of money for a young couple just starting out. Now Steve Vance, a card-carrying Liberal member, says, “In view of what Bill 68 is going to do to drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims, it won’t be much longer.”

Pat Bryson from Cartier, Ontario called in and said, “Hang in there.” He equates what the Liberals are doing to victims under auto insurance with what the same Liberals have done to victims on workers’ compensation. Conrad Noddin from Main Street in Dutton, Ontario called in to say no to Bill 68. He wants a button and a FAIR tabloid and he is going to get that, because we are not afraid to listen to people like Conrad Noddin from Dutton.

We are not afraid to listen to small business people and working people and senior citizens. We are not afraid to fight for them, because we do not owe the insurance companies. We in the New Democratic Party do not owe the insurance companies one red cent. I do not know whether any Liberals can stand up and say the same thing, but we do not owe the insurance companies one red cent.

David Sills from Curlew Drive in Don Mills phoned this afternoon about his disappointment with Bill 68. He spoke about one dictatorship in Ottawa being enough. He does not want another one in Toronto. That is what David Sills has to say about this time allocation motion. David Sills is probably going to call the Premier tomorrow at 965-1941. David Sills is going to call the Premier tomorrow at 965-1941 and he is going to let the Premier know what he thinks about Bill 68.

The opposition to this legislation, the cry for a full debate is so widespread, so complete across the province. Mrs Vangaal from Melbourne Crescent in Brantford called in. She tried to call the Premier. No way. She said, “Keep fighting the Liberals.” On that note, I move adjournment of the debate.

On motion by Mr Kormos, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1800.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

| | |
|--|---|
| Adams, Peter (Peterborough L) | Grandmaitre, Bernard C. (Ottawa East L) |
| Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP) | Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP) |
| Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L) | Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L) |
| Beer, Hon Charles , Minister of Community and Social Services (York North L) | Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP) |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. , Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L) | Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC) |
| Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L) | Hart, Hon Christine E. , Minister of Culture and Communications (York East L) |
| Bradley, Hon James J. , Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L) | Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L) |
| Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC) | Hošek, Chaviva (Oakwood L) |
| Breaugh, Michael J., First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House (Oshawa NDP) | Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC) |
| Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L) | Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC) |
| Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP) | Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP) |
| Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L) | Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L) |
| Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L) | Kerrio, Vincent G. (Niagara Falls L) |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor , Minister of Health (Oriole L) | Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L) |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L) | Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP) |
| Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP) | Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L) |
| Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L) | Kwinter, Hon Monte , Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L) |
| Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L) | Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP) |
| Collins, Hon Shirley , Minister without Portfolio (Wentworth East L) | LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L) |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. , Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development (Renfrew North L) | Leone, Laureano (Downsview L) |
| Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L) | Lipsett, Ron (Grey L) |
| Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP) | Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L) |
| Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L) | MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L) |
| Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC) | Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP) |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC) | Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L) |
| Cureatz, Sam L., Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House (Durham East PC) | Mancini, Hon Remo , Minister of Revenue (Essex South L) |
| Curling, Alvin (Scarborough North L) | Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC) |
| Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L) | Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP) |
| Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L) | Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L) |
| Eakins, John F. (Victoria-Haliburton L) | McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC) |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. , Speaker (Perth L) | McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L) |
| Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L) | McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L) |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. , Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L) | McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC) |
| Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L) | McLeod, Hon Lyn , Minister of Energy and Minister of Natural Resources (Fort William L) |
| Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC) | Miclash, Frank (Kenora L) |
| Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP) | Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L) |
| Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L) | Morin, Hon Gilles E. , Minister without Portfolio (Carleton East L) |
| Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L) | Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste Marie NDP) |
| Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L) | Neumann, David E. (Brantford L) |
| Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L) | Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L) |
| Fontaine, Hon René , Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L) | Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L) |
| Fulton, Ed (Scarborough East L) | Nixon, Hon Robert F. , Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L) |
| Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L) | Oddie Munro, Lily (Hamilton Centre L) |
| | Offer, Hon Steven , Solicitor General (Mississauga North L) |
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| | Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L) |

Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Correctional Services
(Ottawa Centre L)

Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)

Peterson, Hon David R., Premier and President of the Council
and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
(London Centre L)

Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)

Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Labour
(Scarborough-Agincourt L)

Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of
the Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)

Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)

Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)

Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)

Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)

Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)

Rae, Bob (York South NDP)

Ramsay, Hon David, Minister of Agriculture and Food
(Timiskaming L)

Ray, Michael C. (Windsor-Walkerville L)

Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)

Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Riddell, Jack (Huron L)

Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)

Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)

Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)

Scott, Hon Ian G., Attorney General (St George-St David L)

Smith, David W. (Lambton L)

Smith, E. Joan (London South L)

Sola, John (Mississauga East L)

Sorbara, Hon Gregory S., Minister of Consumer and
Commercial Relations (York Centre L)

South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)

Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)

Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)

Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)

Sweeney, Hon John, Minister of Housing and Minister of
Municipal Affairs (Kitchener-Wilmot L)

Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)

Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Ward, Hon Christopher C., Minister of Government Services
(Wentworth North L)

Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)

Wilson, Hon Mavis, Minister without Portfolio
(Dufferin-Peel L)

Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

Wong, Hon Robert C., Minister of Citizenship (Fort York L)

Wrye, Hon William, Minister of Transportation
(Windsor-Sandwich L)

Vacant, Ottawa South

Lists of members of the executive council, parliamentary assistants and members of committees are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

CONTENTS

Wednesday 18 April 1990

Members' statements

| | |
|--|-----|
| Timber management | 611 |
| Mr Hampton | |
| Fibre optic cable | 611 |
| Mr Pollock | |
| Anniversary of Vimy Ridge | 611 |
| Mr Tatham | |
| Apprenticeship training | 611 |
| Miss Martel | |
| Inmates' mental health services | 611 |
| Mr Cureatz | |
| Electricity demand and supply | 612 |
| Mr Cureatz | |
| Disposable diapers | 612 |
| Mr Adams | |
| Forest firefighting | 612 |
| Mr Wildman | |
| Agricultural funding | 612 |
| Mr Villeneuve | |
| Thomas Hennessy | 612 |
| Mr Campbell | |

Statements by the ministry

| | |
|--|-----|
| Vital statistics registration | 613 |
| Mr Sorbara | |
| National Citizenship Week | 613 |
| Mr Wong | |

Responses

| | |
|--|-----|
| Vital statistics registration | 613 |
| Mr R. F. Johnston | |
| National Citizenship Week | 614 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mr Brandt | |

Oral questions

| | |
|---|-----|
| Northern development | 614 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mr Peterson | |
| St Joseph's Training School for Boys | 615 |
| Mr Brandt | |
| Mr Peterson | |
| Soft drink containers | 616 |
| Mrs Grier | |
| Mr Bradley | |
| Hospital beds | 617 |
| Mr Brandt | |
| Mr Peterson | |
| Municipal finances | 617 |
| Mr Laughren | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Case of John Finlayson | 618 |
| Mr Runciman | |
| Mr Scott | |
| Assistance to refugee claimants | 618 |
| Mr Owen | |
| Mr Beer | |
| Earlscourt Child and Family Centre | 619 |
| Mr Allen | |
| Mr Beer | |
| Critical care nursing | 619 |
| Mr Eves | |
| Mr Peterson | |
| Affordable housing | 620 |
| Mr Tatham | |
| Mr Sweeney | |
| Transportation service for the disabled | 620 |
| Mrs Grier | |
| Mr Wrye | |
| Tire tax | 621 |
| Mrs Marland | |
| Mr Bradley | |
| Detroit incinerator | 621 |
| Mr M. C. Ray | |
| Mr Bradley | |
| Dental hygienist program | 622 |
| Miss Martel | |
| Mr Conway | |

Motion

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Committee sitting | 622 |
| Mr Ward | |
| Agreed to | 622 |

Petitions

| | |
|---|-----|
| Licensing of motorboat operators | 622 |
| Mr Daigeler | |
| School opening and closing exercises | 622 |
| Mrs Marland | |

First readings

| | |
|---|-----|
| Change of Name Amendment Act, 1990, Bill 148 | 622 |
| Mr Sorbara | |
| Agreed to | 622 |
| Vital Statistics Amendment Act, 1990, Bill 150 | 622 |
| Mr Sorbara | |
| Agreed to | 622 |
| Good Samaritan Act, 1990, Bill 151 | 622 |
| Mr Haggerty | |
| Agreed to | 623 |

| Government motion | | Other business | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Time allocation, motion 30 | 623 | Adjournment | 640 |
| Mr Kormos | 623 | Alphabetical list of members | 641 |
| Adjourned | 640 | | |

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Le mercredi 18 avril 1990

| Déclaration ministérielle | | Première lecture | |
|--|---------------|--|---------------|
| Enregistrement des statistiques de l'état civil | 613 | Loi de 1990 modifiant de la Loi sur le changement de nom, | |
| M. Sorbara | | projet de loi 148 | 622 |
| | | M. Sorbara | |
| | | Adoption du projet de loi en première lecture | 622 |

19 90



19 90

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 19 April 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le jeudi 19 avril 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Languages in Hansard

Hansard reports all debates in English or French as spoken by the participants. It does not translate remarks made in either language. Headings and tables of contents reflect language use.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 19 April 1990

The House met at 1102.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

ONTARIO YOUNG TRAVELLERS PROGRAM

Mr Kozyra moved resolution 48:

That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing that there presently exists a program called the Ontario young travellers program which assists students in northern Ontario with the cost of travelling to southern Ontario to learn more about their province and experience and access the resources located in the south, the government of Ontario should take steps to implement a reciprocal program allowing students in the south to travel to the north so that they also have the opportunity to take advantage of both the human and natural resources available in the north and develop a greater understanding of the diversity of the province.

Mr Kozyra: I must first apologize for my chest and head cold which affects my voice so much. I will proceed regardless, as a true northerner.

It is my pleasure to put forth this morning what I would call a modest proposal of my own. Like Jonathan Swift's proposal it does involve economic considerations, but unlike his proposal it is far kinder and gentler to the youngsters in our province than his was.

At the present time in the province we have what is called the Ontario young travellers program. This affects directly or indirectly about 23,000 grade 7 and 8 students in northern Ontario who have the potential to take advantage of this. Not all of them do go, but they have the potential because the program exists for them. A good number, several thousand each year, make their way down primarily to Toronto to take advantage of this with their teachers. I think it is an excellent program. It is one that involves a Toronto visit, where they visit the Royal Ontario Museum, Canada's Wonderland, the Ontario Science Centre, that other centre of great renown, the Eaton Centre, for shopping and, last but not least, Queen's Park, where they see the House in action and they take advantage of the activities going on here. Some of them go on to visit Niagara Falls as well. One can see that for them this is a wonderful opportunity, a cultural and educational experience.

Statistics show that in any given year in Ontario there are close to 250,000 students in grades 7 and 8, and approximately 10 per cent of these are in northern Ontario. But I would like to focus on the 90 per cent in southern Ontario who do not have access to this program, who at the present time are shut out of this wonderful experience, not in coming to Toronto, but my proposal is that they visit the centres in northern Ontario for a very rich and lively experience. Northern Ontario has 90 per cent of the land mass, and 90 per cent of the students of this great province never get a valid chance to see this. This 90 per cent factor I think is extremely important.

A little more detail about the Ontario young travellers program: It was established in 1973 by the then Minister of Education, Thomas Wells. There is a subsidy for travel. There is also a

subsidy for overnight accommodation if the students travel more than 1,000 kilometres. At that time, when it was instituted, just to show you the population shift, the northern Ontario student component was roughly 20 per cent. We have suffered a population decline and that has even more implications for the huge numbers of students in southern Ontario.

My proposal would see the expansion of this great program or creation of another one specifically for southern Ontario so that these 90 per cent would be able to see the 90 per cent of northern Ontario that presently very few have a chance to. In so doing they would examine the geographic, cultural and economic diversity of this great province.

If we do not proceed with this type of program, unfortunately we see two Ontarios emerging. There is a prosperous, populous one and a scarcely populated, poorly understood northern Ontario. I think that is something that could stand correcting. So the goals of this proposal are the expansion of the existing program or the creation of a new southern Ontario program to foster appreciation of the province's diversity, to raise the awareness of the students about northern Ontario and to encourage tourism in northern Ontario.

The proposal's specifics include five target areas, as I call them: the Sudbury-North Bay region, the Timmins-Kirkland Lake-Kapuskasing region, the Sault Ste Marie region, the Thunder Bay region, and the Kenora-Fort Frances-Rainy River region.

To be a little more specific, here is a bird's-eye view of some of these regions and what they have to offer as possible tourist highlights. In the Sudbury-North Bay region—let me just read a little bit from here; it sounds like a bit of a tourist travelogue, but it is part of the pitch. In Sudbury they could see such highlights as the Big Nickel mine. "Put on a hardhat and enjoy a fascinating underground guided tour at the Big Nickel mine, compare different mining methods, inspect a powder magazine, see a refuge station where miners retreat in case of emergency, and experience a simulated blast display. At Science North in Sudbury"—Science North is northern Ontario's spectacular hands-on science centre—"pet a porcupine, create a tornado, find a fossil and take it home," etc.

1110

If they travel on to the North Bay region, one of the great attractions is that the Dionne quintuplets were born there. Just a little bit from this brochure: "The world was amazed by the birth of the Dionne quintuplets on May 28, 1934, in nearby Corbeil. This amazement quickly turned to love for the five identical tiny girls. It was a one-in-57-million chance of giving birth to identical quintuplets. The Dionne home museum contains many artefacts from the quint's early days and their growing years—their five little toothbrushes, five prayer books," etc. You get the picture. That would be North Bay.

If they travel on to the Timmins-Kirkland Lake-Kapuskasing area, the students would find out that Timmins is, in terms of area, Canada's largest city, the largest mining municipality in the world, the second largest city in North America, the only Canadian city with 45 registered traplines within city limits and the only city with over 500 lakes and hundreds of miles of rivers and streams. On the Timmins gold mine tour, they will discover a unique adventure 3,500 feet underground at an

operating gold mine in Timmins. They will never forget this exciting tour, which has now become one of the north's fastest-growing attractions.

If they were to move on to the Kenora-Rainy River-Fort Frances area, what is normally known as Ontario's sunset country, many more exciting tours await them, including tours of Ontario paper mills. They could go on to a famous place called Minaki. There is a little bit on Minaki here. "Imagine soaring cliffs overlooking endless lakes, silence broken only by the call of the loon, northern lights flashing across velvet skies. Come to Minaki, experience the Ojibway culture, explore sacred rock carvings, test your skills in a voyageur canoe or hike to the top of Gooseneck Mountain." Just a little taste of that area.

Then there is Thunder Bay itself: the geographic centre of Canada, a city of 120,000 people, the North of Superior tourist area, land of the sleeping giant, where the legend abounds about Nanibijou, the great Ojibway legend of Nanibijou, the prince who fell asleep and turned into this huge rock formation that now graces the harbour of Thunder Bay. Thunder Bay is Canada's second largest port. It is the world's largest grain handling port. It is truly a multicultural city, and its international friendship gardens featuring over 30 displays by the various ethnic associations is a truly wonderful statement of the harmony in which we work. It is amethyst country, amethyst being the provincial mineral rock. There are open pits for amethyst, some of the biggest in the world. You can go there and pick your own amethyst crystal.

They can tour the grain elevators, some of the largest structures ever built, take the harbour cruise and end up at Old Fort William, a historic, authentic re-creation of an early 19th-century trading post, one of the largest such in North America, where history lives every day. Then there is the natural beauty of the Lake Superior shore, Ouimet Canyon, Sibley Provincial Park and our own Niagara of the north, Kakabeka Falls.

Last but not least is the Terry Fox monument. Terry Fox, in his marathon of hope, ran to the halfway point in Canada and, unfortunately, had to stop there. He was very close to Thunder Bay. In his memory, as a tribute to that wonderful effort, there is a magnificent monument close to Thunder Bay.

In conclusion, I think a wonderful opportunity awaits the southern Ontario students who would be able to partake of this program. Conducted annually for grade 7 and 8 students, over a period of time it would involve a huge segment of our population that would have this awareness and appreciation for a large part of Ontario they presently do not have. I think these children would become ambassadors of goodwill through their awareness of this diversity, both cultural and economic, not to mention the tourist input that thousands of students touring the north would have. I think it is an opportunity that should not be missed, and I encourage my colleagues to support me.

Mr Wildman: I rise in support of the resolution my colleague has put forward today. I want to congratulate him in recognizing the need for greater communication and understanding of northern Ontario among people in southern Ontario, particularly our young people.

As he said, most people are unaware of the fact that 90 per cent of the land mass of the province is north of the French River, while we have only about nine per cent of the population. Unfortunately, that population has been dwindling. There has been an outmigration from northern Ontario communities, particularly from the small, one-industry towns, into the larger communities in the north, and from the larger communities in

the north the young people have been moving in greater numbers to southern Ontario for employment.

I want to say first that the Ontario young travellers program is a very good program and one that I am a strong supporter of. It enables northern Ontario students in grades 7 and 8, usually grade 8, to travel to the capital of the province, Toronto, to visit the Legislature and see the zoo that we call the assembly. But it also allows them to see the Metro Toronto Zoo, in many cases, and the other attractions in the Toronto area such as the Ontario Science Centre. Most often the trips include a visit to the new domed stadium for a baseball game, the CN Tower, Ontario Place and the many attractions that I think people in Metropolitan Toronto perhaps come to take for granted as part of being a world-class city.

It also may let northern Ontario students become aware of the tremendous economic activity and commerce in the Toronto area and the enormous size of the communities here compared to most communities in northern Ontario. I hope it also makes them aware of the ethnic diversity of this part of the province, which is mirrored in some ways by many northern communities. I also hope it makes them aware in some way of the social problems that have developed with the enormous growth in this area and the problems of homelessness and poverty that have grown as well as the wealth in this area.

I want to say that I would have liked to have my colleague the member for Port Arthur mention that there should be some improvements to the Ontario young travellers program as it is already constituted. He is probably aware that there has not been a significant increase in the funding for that program for many years. The subsidy for travel for students, which once covered the return air fare from his part of the province to Toronto, as well as some assistance for accommodation and travelling around this part of the province, no longer meets the needs, the costs, with inflation.

In my part of the province, most of the students travel from Algoma by bus. It is a one-day trip by bus for most. Some come by train, and some fly as well, but most travel by bus. The cost of bus transportation has escalated at a rate that it is now impossible for the young travellers program to properly cover the cost. I suspect that may be the case for my friend the member for Algoma-Manitoulin's students as well.

I have attempted to persuade the government to increase the funding for that program, because we all know that the students, their teachers, their parents and friends work very hard to raise money for these trips every year. It is usually a year-long project for the grade 8 students. They are having to raise larger and larger proportions of the cost of the trip now. In some cases, I regret to say, some elementary schools have discontinued their trips and no longer do it under the Ontario young travellers program because they do not think the grant is any longer adequate and they cannot raise enough money locally to cover the deficit. So some of the students whose older brothers and sisters were able to take a trip under the program are now denied that opportunity when they reach grade 8. I think that is most unfortunate and I would encourage all members, particularly all members from the north but all members from southern Ontario as well, to encourage the Ministry of Education to increase the funding for the Ontario young travellers program.

1120

Specifically, I agree with my friend the member for Port Arthur that there is a tremendous need, as I said, to educate the people of southern Ontario about the vastness of the north, the beauty of the north, the resources of the north, the potential of

the north and the problems of the north. We have had raised in this House this week the fact that the Deputy Minister of Northern Development wrote a confidential memo in January 1990 to his minister in the cabinet and pointed out that a large number of one-industry towns in northern Ontario are facing serious economic depression, that we are continuing the boom-bust cycle that resource communities have faced for years, that nothing has changed, that 2,000 jobs are threatened in the Elliot Lake area, for instance, this year, and nothing this government is doing is changing or addressing that.

To be frank with members, I am not being partisan about this. That was the same problem we had with the previous government, and I would say it would probably be a problem if my party were in government too, as a northern member. The reason is this: Not enough people in southern Ontario understand the situation in northern Ontario. I am not being critical of them in saying that; it is not surprising they do not. One of the biggest mistakes that was ever made in this province was splitting the road map and putting southern Ontario on one side of the map and northern Ontario on the back.

Mr D. R. Cooke: Don't do that; we'd be too small.

Mr Wildman: Exactly. The problem is, the scales are different on both maps and most people do not look at the scale and are not used to reading maps when they are just trying to find directions by road. They look at the two and they have no idea how large the territory of northern Ontario really is, because it is on a much smaller scale and the southern Ontario portion is on a larger scale. It is quite correct that if it was all one map, the south would be so small in order to fit it on that size of a page, members would not be able to read the road map in the southern part of the province. That is a problem.

I have had people who I would have hoped when I first came here would have known better. I have had senior bureaucrats in the government, other members of the Legislature and people who work around the Legislature ask me, if I could attend a meeting in Sudbury, for instance, on a Saturday. I have said, "I'm sorry, I would like to be there but I have to be in Hornepayne on the Friday night." They sort of look at me and say, "So why don't you go to Hornepayne on Friday night and go to Sudbury on Saturday?" They do not understand that it is farther to drive from Hornepayne to Sudbury than it is from Toronto to Three Rivers. Somehow that has to change.

If we are going to ever get around the problem of two Ontarios, we have to have an understanding, and frankly, if I could, I would add to this resolution a proposal that used to be a sort of hobbyhorse of the Treasurer when he was in opposition. Years ago there used to be a program for members of the Legislative Assembly where they would be taken on a tour of northern Ontario every couple of years. They would go on the Ontario Northland Railway up to Moosonee, and then they would go up to the Algoma Central Railway north of Sault Ste Marie to Hearst and all along Highway 11 to Thunder Bay and on up to Kenora and Rainy River, on a tour that would take maybe three weeks. It was discontinued because it was considered just a big boondoggle. Well, maybe it was. That was before my time. The Treasurer probably can tell you more about it, but the fact is, at least those members of the assembly learned about the vastness and the distances and, yes, the potential of northern Ontario. They also visited a lot of the small communities and saw some of the problems, or at least got a glimpse of them.

I think that would be a first step. But just educating members of the assembly is not going to change. The fact is, we

have 15 ridings in northern Ontario. We have got only nine per cent of the population. We have to educate the public of southern Ontario about the north or just the fact of numbers is going to make it impossible for any government—and I say that seriously—to put the kind of resources out that are required if we are actually going to change the boom-bust cycle in northern Ontario at any date.

I am not being critical when I say it is normal. If you have three million people living in the Metropolitan Toronto area, all of whom have legitimate needs and concerns that they want the provincial government to respond to, it is natural that the government is going to respond to them. But if some of those three million had a better understanding of what could be done in northern Ontario and how that might benefit southern Ontario, perhaps they would be pressing not just to have the problems of Metro dealt with but also the problems of the north, and then governments would have to respond.

Maybe that is a pipedream. Maybe I am reading too much into the resolution of my friend the member for Port Arthur, but I think it is a good idea. It is a first step. I congratulate him for making the proposal, again with the proviso that I think there should also be some improvements in the current Ontario young travellers program. Also, I think there is a need to get more members of the assembly into the north. Some members of the assembly would say: "What do you mean? We serve on legislative committees and we travel to places like Sudbury and Thunder Bay and Sault Ste Marie for legislative committee hearings." That is true, but they see only the larger centres. You almost never get a legislative committee that goes to Attawapiskat or to Gore Bay or, for that matter, they almost never do anything but fly from Toronto to the Sault or from Toronto to Thunder Bay. Ministers do that, unfortunately.

I think there should be a rule that the Minister of Transportation should not be allowed to take an aircraft. He should be required to drive on Highway 17 and Highway 11 any time he is going to the north. Then we might have decent roads up north. We cannot just fly in and fly out and get a real understanding of the north or the vastness of our area. We have to have people travelling in the area by road, seeing the lakes and the rivers, the forests and the small communities. I commend my friend for bringing in this resolution.

1130

Mr McLean: I am pleased this morning to rise on behalf of our party in support of this resolution from the member for Port Arthur. I congratulate him for his initiative in bringing this forward.

A little history of the Ontario young travellers program: Back on 23 October 1973, the program was announced by the then Minister of Education, Tom Wells. It allowed northern students in grades 7 and 8 to travel to Toronto and to experience the Legislature and other unique areas here in the city. The students received a subsidy to defray their travelling expenses, and students from more than 1,000 kilometres away received funds for overnight accommodation as well.

The young travellers program, at the time of its inception, enabled 20 per cent of Ontario's grade 7 and 8 students from the north to visit Toronto and other southern locations. Given the change in the provincial population distribution, nearly 90 per cent of Ontario students have yet to experience the distinct difference in the north.

When the Ontario young travellers program was introduced back in 1973, as I said, it was intended to allow the people, from the north to travel to Toronto to gain educational experien-

ces. But now, nearly 20 years later, I believe it is time to expand the scope of this program. I agree with my colleague on that. I wholeheartedly agree that the government of Ontario should take the initiative and the necessary steps to encourage students from southern Ontario to travel to the north.

Many of our young people, while having had the opportunity to experience the many faces of southern Ontario, do not know what the northern region of our province really has to offer. They have not seen at first hand the rich forests and lush park lands. They have not looked out over the clear lakes or seen much of the province's wildlife in its natural habitat. They have not visited the people who work in our mines or who live in our logging camps. In short, many of our young people do not know just how diverse this province really is; and without this knowledge, we cannot expect them to adequately deal with the problems which will face Ontario in the next few decades.

Educating our children should not end in the classroom. We must encourage students to learn through experience. And what better place to begin than within the far-reaching corners of their very own province. Northern Ontario offers an education in history, in geography, in geology, in art, in science and, last but not least, in the way in which our cousins in the north live.

As well, I believe that there would be additional benefits from the implementation of a program to assist students from southern Ontario in visiting the north. As Tourism and Recreation critic for our party, I am especially pleased to support this resolution, as I feel that the initiation of such a program would ultimately encourage tourism in northern Ontario. I have no doubt that, once having gained a greater awareness of Ontario's north, the participants of such a program would have the incentive to return to the area. Considering that the tourism industry suffered a massive 27.8 per cent decline in person-trips within the province by Ontarians in 1989 and a net loss of \$3.25 billion in tourism revenues since 1988, we must encourage recreational travel within our province.

Therefore, in the hope of fostering a greater understanding of all of Ontario in the minds and hearts of our young people and in the hope of promoting our vast and beautiful north, I wholeheartedly endorse the resolution. Over the years we have had the junior rangers program, which has been one where young people could have the opportunity to travel to the north, work for the summer and benefit from the diverse parts of this province. The make-work programs that the Ministry of Natural Resources has had over the years have been a great benefit to the young people from the south.

I remember many years ago I had a young person on the agricultural program from the city of Toronto. He had never been out of the city in his life. He came to my farm to work for the summer. What a great experience for a kid who had never been out of the city. I told him the first two weeks there he would be so unhappy that he would want to get back to the city, that he just would not believe what he got himself into. I said, "If you can get through the first two weeks, you will begin to like what you are doing and you will enjoy it." It is unbelievable how that young person picked up on what took place around the farm. He ended up milking cows. To make a long story short, when it came to September he did not want to go back to Toronto. The young lad did not have a muscle in his arms when he came, but when he left he was fit and really enjoyed life.

Those are the types of programs that the government should be implementing further. I see this year it is bringing back the agricultural program for students, and I think it is one of the best programs that the government has had.

Tourism is where a lot of the young people can gain experience. They can get jobs in the north. They can travel to the north. They will get to like it and they will want to go back there. So the resolution from the member today is really what we hope will make some of those things happen, but not only that. The member for Algoma speaks about the diverse culture in northern Ontario. Many of us know what it is, but people in southern Ontario are not fully aware of what it is. I think to give them the opportunity to travel to the north is a great education, and it furthers their experience in the habitat and the great clear waters that we have in the north.

I compliment the member for bringing this resolution forward. I will leave the balance of my time for my colleague the member for Hastings-Peterborough.

Mr D. R. Cooke: It gives me great pleasure to support the resolution brought forward by my colleague the member for Port Arthur, who in my view is one of the more sensitive and thoughtful members of this Legislature. It strikes me that expanding the present Ontario young travellers program to encourage southern-based youngsters to visit the north is a welcome and logical move forward.

It would be one of the more useful in a series of positive initiatives taken by this government to promote northern development in this province. As the members know, of course, I am from southwestern Ontario and it is only fairly recently that I have begun to explore the vast expanses of our province that lie north of the Great Lakes. I am not sure why it is that I waited this long, but the experience has been fantastic.

In the period prior to my election to this Legislature I had been in Sudbury and North Bay many times, but I can think only of two occasions that I have been north or west of those cities. On one occasion, I had a trial in Kapuskasing and I meandered up the eastern side of northeastern Ontario, and on the other occasion I came by train from Banff to Toronto on the CP line. My recollection of that particular trip was that while the Rockies and the Prairies have their own beauty, unquestionably the most beautiful area in Canada is northern Ontario.

I expect that I am not alone in this regard. Certainly I am not alone among the general population of our province. But I would also wager that mine is not an uncommon experience, even among members of this House, as the member for Algoma has been pointing out. For me, as I suppose it is for most southerners, the north was too often perceived as a vast, cold, snow-covered wasteland. I had only a vague idea about who lived there and what they did.

What I have found in the period of time since I have been elected is that there is a series of vibrant and resourceful communities eager to make a contribution to the vitality of the whole province. What I have found as well is that we have a region that is too often left out of the mainstream, a community whose concerns have traditionally been given a low priority by the larger, more populous and more affluent south. So it has been a welcome eye opener to me to see for myself what it had to offer.

1140

I would like to relate back particularly to two visits to the north that I have had in the last year, both of which have had a profound effect on my overall understanding of a variety of issues. Call it a new perspective, if you will, but in any case I am very glad of the opportunity to see things at first hand that so many of us try to understand through news clips and other secondhand reports.

Last summer I was invited by the residents of the village of Temagami, concerned about the impact of restrictions on logging in an area that is dependent on that industry for a livelihood and has been for generations, to visit their village. While I was there I toured their facilities, the Sherman mine as well as the pulp mill, visited with the townspeople, heard how important forestry is to the economic wellbeing of the townspeople. Thereafter, I visited and spent some time with the local organizers of the Temagami Wilderness Society. I saw the trees and the parks and the wildlife, and I saw clear-cut.

I was awed by the beauty of what is there. I was concerned about clear-cut, but overall my visit to the area gave me a much clearer perspective on a very complex range of conflicting needs and competing interests in that community. I only bring this up to illustrate how much more thorough my understanding is, having spent some time in the area talking to the people affected and seeing with my own eyes what previously I had seen only on television.

Also last summer I was the guest of the member for Kenora, visiting in the riding of Kenora in northwestern Ontario. There I visited the Whitedog reserve, discussed with the native people some of their concerns, their relationship with government, good and bad, some of their attitudes and needs for alternative dispute settlement problems. I visited, as well, the mine at Red Lake. I visited the mill in Dryden, and again I saw some examples that concerned me about clear-cut in the forest industry. But the fact of the matter is that while my view of that may be a little different from that of some northerners, it is important that we be involved in that dialogue.

Each of these experiences has impressed upon me a very important lesson. Simply put, there is really no substitute for direct experience in developing a full awareness of anything. Obviously, it is not always possible to rely on the luxury of direct experience, but surely, when the opportunity is available, you should reach out and grab it.

I am certain that intermediate-level students would grab these available opportunities. If they could be provided with a chance to visit our northern communities, to see how the other half lives, works and plays, I am convinced they would jump at that chance. What 12- or 13-year-old would not be thoroughly enthralled at the prospect of going somewhere new and different? And the best part about it is that it would be good for them. I know from personal experience the value of a program that takes people into a new environment and shows them another side of life.

Northerners who have taken part in the existing program have only good things to report, as far as I know. Surely young people from the south would gain as much. As a matter of fact, an argument could be made that they would gain more from the program, if only because it is much more likely that a northern resident at some stage would have reason, in any event, to come to the south to access services that are not readily available in the north, in contrast to most southerners, who do not have the same requirement to go north.

Just look at the benefits of such interaction at an early stage of these young people's collective development. They would take a more thorough understanding of the familiarity of this part of our great province into their lives. They would perhaps remember their experiences and appreciate them better, the unique hardships that are faced in northern communities. They would recognize the potential for economic development and growth and help all Ontarians take advantage of the richness of the people and the land. Finally, they would understand the

need to promote and ensure that nobody feels he is peripheral to the development of this province.

Surely it is the case, when people are developing and Premiers are talking about the division of this country, that we in this province, who perhaps have the most to lose, stick together. The only way we are going to do it is if we are united and we understand each other. This program would be just the kind of incentive we would need in the south to change our attitudes.

Mr Pollock: I am pleased to take part in this debate and I want to compliment the member for Port Arthur for bringing it forward. I think it is a worthwhile resolution and I think the schoolchildren from southern Ontario should have the opportunity to go and visit northern Ontario.

I was at a meeting this morning where we were talking about international trade. The meeting was concerned with the Ontario International Corp. They mentioned the fact that when you are travelling abroad you do not even hear about Ontario. Some people know where Toronto is, but they do not even know where Ontario is. I think this is a message we also have to get out. We all here in Ontario have heard about "Ontario—yours to discover!" and, of course, "Ontario—Incredible!" but others of our trading nations have never really heard of Ontario in that respect.

There is no question that northern Ontario is a great place to visit. I was at a meeting in Madoc at one time. The Honourable Leo Bernier was speaking at that particular meeting and he told the audience there that he was closer to Halifax, Nova Scotia, than he was to his home in Sioux Lookout. I have also had the privilege of driving out west. It takes you approximately two days to drive through Ontario.

Also, I have visited Science North in Sudbury. It is a great place to visit. I have seen the Big Nickel display at the Sudbury mines and I have had the privilege of seeing the trains that dump the slag from the mines. That is quite a colourful sight, because they drive up on the hill, they dump this red-hot slag, and as it trickles down the hill, it is something to see.

I have had the experience of getting a speeding ticket in northern Ontario, on Highway 11. I have also listened to the tales of the moose hunters and some of their experiences up in northern Ontario. Of course, I have played golf at Minaki Lodge. Some people question Minaki Lodge, but it is really and truly a world-class facility.

I certainly believe that not all the money should be spent right here in Toronto or the greater Metro area. People from all over Ontario pay a sales tax; so some of that money should be spent in northern Ontario and in eastern Ontario.

I fully support this member's resolution to have schoolchildren go up to northern Ontario and see what is there. I am sure that later on in life they will go back to northern Ontario as tourists, and this would be good for the tourist business in northern Ontario.

There is a good possibility that the next Premier of this province will be from northern Ontario, and I think particularly of North Bay. There is great fishing in northern Ontario. I have had the experience of going fishing in one of those remote areas in northern Ontario, and it was a better, a more pressing, experience than actually going to Florida.

One other experience I had, and I think it is important to mention this at this particular time, was at the unveiling of the Terry Fox memorial just east of Thunder Bay. It was just 10 years ago that Terry Fox was in the process of making his run across Canada. I remember the Lieutenant Governor saying at that particular unveiling that maybe it was meant to be that

Terry Fox ended his run there because it was halfway between east and west.

Those are a few of the comments I want to leave with you. Once again, I just want to compliment the member for Port Arthur for bringing this resolution forward.

1150

Mr Brown: I am most happy today to indicate to the member for Port Arthur that I support his resolution. As a member from a northern rural riding, I appreciate his efforts. We as northerners are quite accustomed to the rugged beauty of our land: the literally thousands of lakes, the hardwood and softwood forests, the unforgettable northern lights and the breathtaking landscapes.

However, many children from southern Ontario have yet to experience the north, and some unfortunately never will. It is with this in mind that I must congratulate my colleague the member for Port Arthur for the introduction of this private member's resolution that would assist the children in southern Ontario with the cost of travelling to the north to learn more about their province. This would also give them a better understanding of the north's resources, both human and natural, and would help in understanding the great geographical, cultural and economic diversity of the north.

As my colleague has already mentioned, a program, referred to as the Ontario young travellers program, is in place for the students of northern Ontario. Is it not fair that we reciprocate and allow southerners to come north?

In my capacity as a member of this Legislature, I am required to be in southern Ontario virtually every week for several days. On some occasions, my family will come to visit. This gives my children a chance to see what Toronto is about, what southern Ontario is about, what makes this place tick. It would certainly be very good for us to allow southern children to find out what makes northern Ontario tick.

In 1973, when this program was first introduced, it allowed northern students from grades 7 and 8 to get a chance to take in the sights and sounds of Toronto. These students received a subsidy to defray their travelling expenses, and students travelling from more than 1,000 kilometres away received additional funds to take care of their overnight accommodation. In my riding alone, literally thousands of students have visited Queen's Park and Toronto using this fine program.

An excursion to the north for southerners would enlighten the students as to how we, as northerners, feel about our natural resources and what we draw from them and what contribution those resources make to the provincial economy. Let them learn that our livelihoods are tied to the minerals we mine, the fish we catch, the forests we harvest. Let them learn of our commitment to sustainable development.

I believe strongly, and public opinion polls back this up, that northerners have a stronger sense of environmental issues than any others in the province. Northerners know that once the resource is depleted, there is no more work, there is no more economy and our way of life will disappear.

These types of exchanges between students are not designed to teach the visitor everything about what he or she might like to know; rather, they are meant to give a small flavour of the community. As a member who represents a rural northern Ontario riding, I recognize that it is not possible for students to really get a flavour on a two- or three-day visit, but I think that experiencing our part of the north for just a few days will perk their interest, give them a better understanding and have them return.

A few short years ago I had the opportunity and privilege, as a Rotarian, of hosting an exchange student from Australia. During her three-month stay at our home she became very familiar with and gained a great deal of appreciation for our lifestyle. I believe that exchanges are very important. I am pleased to note that one of the elementary schools in my riding has just recently arranged a trip to Quebec City. When they made the arrangements, they were hoping to take one bus from this small elementary school to Quebec City. The demand to learn about the culture of our neighbouring province was so great that they had to rent two buses; so I believe the interest is there.

I would gladly welcome virtually all students from southern Ontario to my riding of Algoma-Manitoulin. Here they can see the diversity of northern Ontario. They can see the town of Elliot Lake—small by Ontario standards but large by northern Ontario standards—and its citizens. They would find that the jewel in the wilderness, as it is referred to, is not unlike most northern Ontario towns, with its friendly people and accommodating atmosphere. They would discover that it is primarily a mining town. They would discover the unique economic challenges that are faced by one-industry mining towns.

If they came to my riding, they could experience a trip to a pulp and paper mill in Espanola, which would be a valuable learning experience. They would come away knowing about a world-class pulp and paper plant that is also world-class environmentally sound. They would learn where the products of their everyday lives are made, and they would know about the people who make them. They would find for themselves that northerners are hardworking and committed individuals with a lifestyle that is both unique and wonderful.

They could also visit Manitoulin Island, where they could see the agricultural communities, they could see our way of life and they could see why so many tourists come to our area, to see the wildlife, to catch fish, to enjoy a setting that I think is unique in Ontario.

In conclusion, I think that, for the betterment of the children of this province, support of this member's resolution is very important.

Mr J. M. Johnson: In the two minutes that I have, I would like to just commend the member for Port Arthur for this resolution, whose main thrust is to give our young people the opportunity to develop a greater understanding of the diversity of our great province. That is an excellent idea and I fully support it.

Many years ago, when my children were quite young, I and my family used to take summer vacations and we travelled to all parts of this province. Indeed, we travelled from coast to coast, but the highlights were our trips to the north, which provided an opportunity for my young children to see what it was like in the north country.

I recall the first time that we travelled right through the west, through northern Ontario to the Manitoba border. From my home town of Mount Forest it was practically the exact distance to the Manitoba border as it is to the Florida border. I could equate to my children the fact that we can travel through all the states to the Florida border, which are several, or go the same distance across through the north to the Manitoba border.

As my friend and colleague the member for Hastings-Peterborough mentioned, the vastness of this province is hard to understand unless you have actually travelled it. To spend two or three days driving 700 miles a day to reach the western border indicates that there is a lot to see in this great province of ours.

I have had the opportunity in the past to fish up in Moosonee and Winisk and some of the places quite far up north, and the fishing is fantastic. This morning, by coincidence, we had an opportunity to meet with the member for Huron, who is the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources and who is conducting a review of the fish stock in this province. I would heartily recommend that we should take a trip. Maybe the members of the committee would invite the members of the Legislature to travel to the north and try their luck at fishing.

In the eight seconds left, I would just like to say that I support the comments of the member for Hastings-Peterborough about its being time for a Premier from the north.

Mr Kozyra: It is very gratifying to have this unanimous support from members of the three parties. I would like specifically to thank the members who spoke so thoughtfully and so supportively of this resolution, the member for Algoma, the member for Simcoe East, the member for Hastings-Peterborough, the member for Wellington, the member for Kitchener and the member for Algoma-Manitoulin. I would also like to thank the intern who is working in my office for this term, Shaun Cody, for his research and input into this resolution.

The member for Algoma made some interesting recommendations, and I will be gladly following them up. The improvements he spoke to are very valid. At the present time, a full-fare ticket from Thunder Bay to Toronto is over \$500, more than it might cost to go to Europe or California. This is the kind of thing that people travelling to the north are faced with. From Kenora to Toronto the fare is about \$680.

I am sorry to hear that the member for Hastings-Peterborough got a speeding ticket in the north, but perhaps he was going too fast to take in our wonderful, majestic northern beauty and rightfully deserved one.

The member for Algoma also mentioned a lack perhaps of members seeing the north. I would like to point out that at least the entire Liberal caucus has been at Quetico. They found that a very valuable experience.

I think we all appreciate the value of travel. I think it is important that we start with our own great province and expand this program so that the north is taken into account. I would say that networking is possible. Where you get five schools from a city, they could travel to these five areas and then share their experience and get an experience of the whole north.

Finally, let's not forget that children are our most valuable natural resource and this opportunity to travel is one of the finest things we could do.

Motion agreed to.

ROYAL ASSENT

The Deputy Speaker: I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in his chambers.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: The following are the titles of the bills to which His Honour has assented:

Bill 115, An Act to amend the Representation Act, 1986;

Bill Pr8, An Act respecting National Capital Children's Oncology Care Inc;

Bill Pr36, An Act to revive The P & P Murray Foundation;

Bill Pr40, An Act to revive The Immanuel Christian School Society of East Toronto;

Bill Pr44, An Act respecting the Royal Canadian Legion;

Bill Pr47, An Act respecting Lake of the Woods District Hospital;

Bill Pr 49, An Act to revive 393598 Ontario Limited;

Bill Pr55, An Act to revive Association of Stoney Lake Cottagers Inc;

Bill Pr57, An Act respecting the City of North Bay;

Bill Pr58, An Act to revive Gursikh Sabha Canada;

Bill Pr61, An Act to incorporate The City of Chatham Foundation;

Bill Pr62, An Act respecting the City of Toronto.

The House recessed at 1204.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1330.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Mr R. F. Johnston: I have a letter here from the Archbishop of Niagara, Archbishop Bothwell, regarding his concern and the concern of many people that the report from Dr Glenn Watson about religion in the public schools has still not been released by this government, even though it has had it in its possession since January of this year and it promised that it would be released by the end of March, after it said that it could not do it in February because it had some problems with translation. It is still not here today and there are many people concerned, even people like myself whose religious affiliation is fairly obscure in terms of trying to divine what it might be.

There are those of us who think that a series of governments that have not changed curriculum on religious education since 1949 might be excused being a few months late again in even bringing forward a report, but when I get messages regularly through to my office about groups like the Gideons society continually bringing forward New Testaments and offering them to every child in a class in various schools around the province, and we hear still that the ruling of the Supreme Court is being flouted in certain areas by certain denominations that are trying to proselytize a particular point of view, I say it is time that this report was brought forward so we can finally update and upgrade and make multiculturally sensitive the religious education we expect to see in the public education system of the province. I call on the government to bring it forward at the earliest opportunity.

AGRICULTURAL FUNDING

Mr J. M. Johnson: I would like to bring to the attention of the House a very serious concern I have relating to the farmers of Ontario and certainly many farmers in my riding of Wellington. It is the urgent need for the reinstatement of the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program, OFFIR, which is needed more so now than ever before.

As members will be aware, financial analysts are predicting that a prime lending rate of 15 per cent, the highest since the 1981-82 recession, is possible as prices and the Canadian dollar continue to rise. Our farmers cannot pay any higher interest rates. The Farm Debt Review Board recorded a significant increase in the number of farmers in financial difficulty during the past year, and with the continued fall in commodity prices and increasing interest rates this trend will continue and in fact escalate.

As my colleague the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry stated in the House yesterday, "Farmers need a farm tax reduction program that makes sense and is not simply an election gimmick which will disappear after one year."

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Ontario Cattlemen's Association and the Ontario Corn Producers' Association have all made recommendations on what initiatives the government might take in addressing this issue. I hope the Treasurer has included in his budget a financial support program that will address this issue.

YOUTH GANGS

Mr Faubert: On 10 April, I held a public forum on community safety. The emergence of youth gang activity in Metropolitan Toronto, which became prominent starting in early 1988, was the most discussed concern. As one of the first representatives to raise this issue publicly in the fall of 1988, I remain concerned that the need to promote increased awareness of this issue among our youth, parents and teachers has still to be effectively addressed.

I commend, however, the Metropolitan Toronto council and the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force for taking a preventive approach to the problem. By educating youth, through the schools, on the consequences of participation in youth gangs, they hope to reduce youth gang involvement at its source before the damage is done.

Our young people must be made aware of the dangers, the consequences and indeed the penalties that can result from participation in such gang activity. The teachers and parents in our communities must be educated in how to recognize and deal with youth involved in gang activities.

In Vancouver a number of innovative preventive approaches are being taken, such as radio programs, newspaper articles, pamphlets to assist parents and school boards, theatrical projects dealing with the consequences of youth gang participation, short TV programs and anti-youth-gang video projects. These projects should be given every consideration by all levels of government serving Metropolitan Toronto.

Surely there is more we could be doing. I encourage our government to consider some of these innovative approaches to resolve the issue.

DOCTORS' FEES

Mr Reville: I was reading Hansard this morning, as is my wont, and I was reading volume 2 of the debates from 1986 and 1987. I had got up to page 1796 at 11:50 am of that day, and this is what was said, "No one in this province will pay more for insured medical services than the schedule of benefits permits."

There it is in black and white. It must be true. It is in Hansard. Yet when I finished reading my Hansard, I read, oh no, the Globe and Mail and discovered that 1,144 people indeed paid more for insured medical services than the schedule of benefits permitted in the last year, and they paid that amount of money to 193 physicians.

When the Ministry of Health was asked why it did not do something about this, it said, "Oh well, we docked the money from their cheques." This government has got to take the cake for being one of the larger wet noodles around.

EARTH DAY

Mr Sterling: This Sunday 22 April is Earth Day, a celebration of the earth and a call to citizens of the world to act on behalf of the environment. This year, 1990, marks the 20th anniversary of the first and only observance of Earth Day by about 20 million in the United States. Their actions in 1970 had many positive results, including the creation of the US Environmental Protection Agency.

At that time environmental problems did not seem very pressing. We were much too busy with other concerns. Now we realize that the health of our planet is a critical issue requiring

immediate attention. Environmentalists decided to commemorate the 1970 Earth Day by organizing a worldwide event focused on the environment and make the 1990s the turnaround decade to reverse the damage already done to our air, water and land.

Earth Day will be celebrated in 118 countries around the world from Australia to Zimbabwe, and 100 billion people are expected to participate. The slogan is, "Who says you can't change the world?" Organizers want to make this a decade of environmental activism that will promote our understanding of nature so that we can work in harmony with it.

Here in Ontario most communities across the province have planned various events for Saturday and Sunday and next week. We urge everyone to get involved and find out what can be done individually and collectively to save our planet.

INTEREST RATES

Mr Matrundola: I am appealing to our government to call upon Prime Minister Mulroney, Finance Minister Wilson, Bank of Canada Governor John Crow and the federal government to reduce interest rates.

On 5 April the prime rate hit 14.25 per cent. Today it may reach 15 per cent, with most of the public paying 18 per cent.

Crow blames the inflation rate, but an inflation rate of 5.5 per cent is quite reasonable. We have an average jobless rate of 7.2 per cent across Canada. Yes, Ontario, as the business heart of the country, still commands the strongest economy with an unemployment rate of 5.3 per cent. But what about New Brunswick with an unemployment rate of 11.9 per cent, or Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland with rates of 14.2 per cent and 14.7 per cent respectively?

This idea of zero inflation is totally insane because the repercussions are damaging and irreparable. If we allow Ontario's unemployment rate to reach over eight per cent, then some Canadian provinces may reach over 20 per cent. It is my considered opinion that this is like performing a complete blood transfusion. When people need a complete a blood transfusion, they must be very sick.

It is clear that John Crow, Wilson and Mulroney want, for the sake of zero inflation, the Canadian people on the breadline. I submit that John Crow is a scarecrow, and we must let those thick heads of Crow, Wilson and Mulroney join the breadlines themselves.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr Matrundola: We must let them have some of their own medicine so they will understand what it is like to be without work and with the obligation of feeding a family.

The Speaker: Thank you; the member for Scarborough West.

1340

EDUCATION FINANCING

Mr R. F. Johnston: Not a second too soon, Mr Speaker; I feared implosion there.

Last night I was at a meeting where there was almost an explosion at the Toronto Board of Education. Hundreds of very concerned parents came out to try to understand why it is that they should have to pay all the costs of education for their children in their area.

Hon Mr Sorbara: Is this Blazing Saddles? Is this the real Blazing Saddles?

Mr R. F. Johnston: It is the same kind of thing that Mel Brooks's protégé over there wants me to talk about, which is happening in Ottawa, which is to say that the board of education there is in exactly the same position and has been considering major cut to kids with learning disabilities and the services of psychologists on the board.

The same kind of problem has recently come up with the Metropolitan Toronto School Board, where had it not been for a plea from poverty groups from Scarborough and other places, it also would have cut back programs to try to keep its increases this year down below the double digits that it looks like many boards of education are going to have to face.

The reason for this is that this government is now paying only 40 per cent of the cost of education, down another percentage point from last year alone, beating the Tories at their own record for cutting back their provincial percentage. This Treasurer is now, in another few days, going to come before us with a balanced budget, a few million dollars in food for hungry kids in the school system, and is basically balancing that budget on the backs of school boards and kids who need a proper education in the province of Ontario.

VICTIMS OF CRIME

Mr Jackson: On Tuesday the Attorney General informed the House about activities his ministry would be involved in to mark Community Justice Week. While recognizing that increasing public awareness about our justice system is important, we must also recognize that the most crucial justice issue today is the specific one involving the rights of victims of crime.

Crime victims help our justice system achieve convictions in 60 per cent of all crimes. The justice system would simply not be able to function without them, and yet so little has been done on their behalf. Instead of emphasizing mock trials, the Attorney General should be responding to the situation of continuous victimization of citizens involved in real trials who look on helplessly as their assailants are freed on bail to walk the streets to harass their victims once more.

How will Community Justice Week assist the children of a family in my riding who suffered incestuous abuse by their father and who were then thwarted in their attempts to gain justice from our legal system, or a teenager, who has attempted suicide because she cannot obtain counselling to help her heal the psychological wounds criminally inflicted upon her?

These are problems that Community Justice Week neither addresses nor resolves. As one of only two provinces that still do not have a crime victims' bill of rights, Ontario is lagging behind in this important area.

On behalf of the victims of crime in this province, I call on the Attorney General and the Liberal MPPs to stop their boycott of a victims' bill of rights. It would indeed be a fitting tribute to Community Justice Week if the Attorney General would ensure that Bill 113 is sent to the justice committee as soon as possible and given a speedy passage into law.

ANNIVERSARY OF KATYN FOREST MASSACRE

Mr Ruprecht: This Sunday will be a very sad day for Polish Canadians. On 22 April the Polish Canadian Congress will be commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Katyn forest massacre, where 15,000 Polish officers were murdered.

This event is recognized by historians as one of the most tragic mass murders committed against a nation that was totally helpless and defenceless. The perpetrators now recognize that the the Russian secret police was to blame for it. Until last week

the Soviet government did not accept the responsibility. We hope that today the Soviet government will have the courage to accept responsibility for other crimes against helpless victims.

As we mourn this Sunday with those who lost their loved ones, let us remember that the Polish Canadian Congress encourages all interested parties to attend. At 11:30 in the morning on Sunday will be the mass at St Casimir's Church. Then at 1 pm will be the memorial march to the Katyn monument on Roncesvalles Avenue at King and Queen streets. At 4:30 there will be a commemorative dinner at the Polish Cultural Centre on Beverley Street. I would encourage all of us to attend.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Hon Mr Sweeney: In my capacity as Minister of Municipal Affairs I would like to make a statement on openness and accountability in municipal government.

Ontario's 839 municipalities differ in size and structure, from Metropolitan Toronto with more than two million people to Cockburn Island with only three, but all municipalities share the same basic principles of serving their residents.

We need to ensure that municipal councils, school boards and municipal agencies, boards and commissions continue to have the confidence of their public. They must be as open, clearly understandable and as accountable as possible. That is why the government, with the assistance of municipal leaders, is embarking on three initiatives to ensure openness, clarity and accountability in local government.

First, I intend to introduce legislation later this afternoon to ensure that the public's business is conducted in public and not behind closed doors. This legislation will set out clear guidelines to ensure that local government meetings are open to the public. Exemptions to allow private meetings will be limited and clearly defined.

This legislation also deals with another aspect of municipal government in which openness is crucial, and that is the sale of surplus assets, especially land. The legislation will require municipalities to adopt bylaws establishing their own procedures for both the conduct of meetings and the sale of assets. This will ensure that people have an opportunity to know and understand the rules by which their local government operates and can hold their representatives to account if these rules are not followed.

I am very aware of the diverse needs of Ontario's municipalities. This legislation provides municipalities with flexibility to tailor procedural bylaws to fit their own needs, as long as they adhere to principles outlined in the legislation. For example, the legislation requires that when selling land, municipalities obtain at least one appraisal from an accredited appraiser, but I would expect that many municipalities will impose even more stringent rules on themselves.

Another important aspect of this legislation involves housing. We are all aware that it is necessary for all levels of government to work together to ensure that the people of Ontario who need our assistance have adequate homes. For that reason, the legislation will require that the province be given the first right of refusal to purchase surplus municipal land being sold in certain high-growth municipalities where the need for affordable housing is greatest. The province already has a similar policy to allow municipalities to acquire provincial land. I intend to consult with municipalities to determine the best way to implement this policy to serve the needs of municipalities and the provincial government.

The second initiative is designed to assure members of the public that their municipal representatives are acting in their best interests at all times. Following the 1988 municipal elections, ministry staff met with municipalities, municipal organizations and other interest groups across the province to consult on improvements to the electoral process. The reports on municipal elections by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Association of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers provided an important focus of discussion for this consultation.

Staff are reviewing the current legislation on municipal election contributions and spending, and later this year I will introduce legislation to address a number of concerns expressed after the 1988 municipal elections. The new legislation will also improve the rules regarding how much money contributors may donate to municipal candidates, and it will deal as well with the surplus funds many candidates are left with at the end of a campaign.

1350

The third and final initiative in this package involves reviewing municipal conflict-of-interest legislation. I believe that the citizens of Ontario must be reassured of the integrity of their local government, and the rules on conflict of interest must be clear and easily understood by local representatives and the public.

I am releasing today a discussion paper on this topic this afternoon. This paper represents a framework to facilitate discussion of this complex issue. It examines issues and new policy options but does not make specific recommendations.

I will be appointing a consultation committee which will receive advice from individuals and groups on the paper. This committee will be chaired by Cy Armstrong. Mr Armstrong has had a long and distinguished career in municipal government. Most recently he was the city manager of the city of Edmonton, and for many years before that he was the chief administrative officer of the region of Hamilton-Wentworth.

I have had the opportunity to discuss these initiatives with Grant Hopcroft, the president of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. I am pleased to recognize Mr Hopcroft in the east gallery. The association has forwarded a list of representatives to sit on the consultation committee. We are also inviting the Ontario Press Council, the Ontario School Trustees' Council and the Law Society of Upper Canada to be represented on the committee.

The committee will hold meetings in communities across Ontario, and I urge municipal councillors and members of the public to make their views known to the committee.

These initiatives and the new freedom of information legislation for municipalities, which takes effect next year, have one goal: to ensure that the level of government that is closest to the people is as open, as well understood and as accountable, as possible.

NATIONAL CONSUMER WEEK

SEMAINE NATIONALE DES CONSOMMATEURS

Hon Mr Sorbara: It is my pleasure to inform the members of the House that the last full week of April will be known this year and in future as National Consumer Week. This year the dates are 23 April to 29 April. This marks the inauguration of this event on a national scale, co-ordinated by consumer affairs departments in the provinces, the territories and, of course, the federal government.

This year's theme is "Team up for a stronger marketplace! Business, consumers and government." It is a message that demonstrates just how the marketplace works and recognizes the important part played by everyone in obtaining an open and fair marketplace.

Les célébrations de 1990 se dérouleront autour du thème «Faisons équipe pour un marché dynamique : consommateurs, entreprises, gouvernements». Il s'agit alors d'un message qui montre bien à quel point les forces vives de l'économie sont à l'oeuvre et reconnaissent l'importance du rôle que chacun joue en faveur d'un marché ouvert et équitable.

In proclaiming National Consumer Week, I am pleased to have representatives of the Ontario branch of the Consumers' Association of Canada and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce joining us in recognizing this event. I would refer members of the House to the gallery. Joining us today are Joan Huzar, president of the Ontario wing of the Consumers' Association of Canada, and Linda Matthews, president of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

It is significant that we begin a national consumer awareness effort in the year designated as International Year of Literacy. With an estimated five million Canadians considered functionally illiterate, my ministry is even more conscious of the enormous number of vulnerable consumers who need to be informed and educated in special ways to function adequately in today's marketplace. To do the job, we look to the support of all members and the help of such organizations as are represented here today.

I am also pleased to provide my honourable colleagues with a copy of our consumer week kit. Members will find those kits in their mailboxes downstairs.

Finally, it is also my pleasure to invite all members to join me and representatives of the Consumers' Association of Canada and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce in room 113 following question period for a reception which will be for the celebration of National Consumer Week. As I said, members of the two associations will be there, along with other associations representing the groups that our ministry works with.

RESPONSES

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr B. Rae: I would like to respond to the statement by the Minister of Municipal Affairs concerning the municipal conflict-of-interest discussion paper.

I should say to the minister first of all that I am surprised and disappointed that on page 12 of the background document the paper would say: "Some concerns not addressed in this paper include: What conflict-of-interest rules if any should apply to municipal staff?" and "Should the act cover other benefits besides money?"

I find it incomprehensible that the government would be talking about a coherent approach to the conflicts of interest within a municipality without being able to answer clearly in the affirmative what conflict-of-interest rules, if any, should apply to municipal staff. It is difficult for me to understand, for example, how somebody who has a role in planning or in development would not be clearly covered by conflict-of-interest rules and guidelines with respect to his advice and participation. I find it incomprehensible that this would not be seen as a critical area for public policy.

I might also say I find it a little strange that the writer of the background paper would ask the question, "Should the act cover other benefits besides money?"

Interjection.

Mr B. Rae: My colleague the member for Scarborough West, in his inimitable fashion, says, "Should it refer to refrigerators?" The point is, of course, it needs to refer to any benefit that is being transferred to an individual or to any benefit that an individual might receive.

I think the government has to understand the questions we have raised in this House over the last number of years on this very critical question of conflict of interest. The major issues that have been raised by the way in which decisions have been taken in certain municipalities and the extraordinary pressure that is brought to bear on municipalities by the development process itself and by the development industry have got to be understood. We have to have laws to provide that protection and to build that protection into our decision-making process.

You do not have to be a genius to understand that in southern Ontario in the last decade we have seen one of the greatest building and expansion booms in our history. I would say there has never been a time in Canadian history when a boom of this kind has not been accompanied by potential and real conflicts of interest. Anybody who reads Canadian history would understand that is the temptation that is there, that is the process that is there. We are dealing with human beings, and that is the problem we face.

We have faced this problem in a major way in the greater Toronto area in the last few years, but that is not alone. We have faced problems with respect to the financing of municipal election campaigns. We have to come to terms with the fact that the reality of municipal politics today is that the financing of municipal politics is controlled basically, in a majority sense, by one industry and one industry alone, and that is the one industry that stands to benefit by decisions that are taken at the municipal level. We have to clean up that process, we have to clean up that financing and we have to ensure that the laws are in place which guarantee that the public interest is protected.

This government has consistently stonewalled the idea of a serious public inquiry which would deal with the adequacy of municipal conflict of interest, which would deal with the adequacy of the Planning Act and which would deal with the adequacy of regional government as to whether it is strong enough and capable enough to deal with the degree of development that is taking place.

The kinds of things that have taken place in communities in this area and across the province can be protected against, but only if the government has the determination to do it. I do not think this discussion paper reveals a sufficient determination on the part of government, and we want to see action taken now. We still want to see that public inquiry put in place.

1400

Mr Sterling: At the outset, in talking about municipal conflict of interest and about the freedom of information laws, which have now been passed and which will come into effect at our municipal level, I would like to say to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, that the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act for the province of Ontario has been an abysmal failure. It is now harder to obtain information from the Ontario government than it was before that act was passed. We wait longer for information than was the case before the freedom of information act was passed.

I do hope that the act which was passed by this Legislature for municipalities will be respected by the municipalities when put into place and implemented. This government has used the freedom of information act for the province as a stalling tactic

to the opposition, to the members of the press and to the members of the public who want to get information. It is almost routine that the response from every ministry, when you ask for a piece of information, is a request for an extension of the time to respond. The response you get almost always requires further correspondence. Civil servants, on the instructions of the ministers of this government, are using it as a secrecy act.

Secondly, with regard to the Members' Conflict of Interest Act, which governs this Legislative Assembly and members of the cabinet of Ontario, to my knowledge, there has not been one reference of conflict of interest to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner in this province under our act, the reason being that every MPP in this Legislature knows that the act is a shield for the government in the way that the act was constructed by this government. In other words, if you bring a complaint to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, then before you submit your application for a review, you can bank on him whitewashing what the government will do, because the government has constructed the legislation in such a manner that it is a whitewash.

If you refer a matter to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and he comes back with either a negative or a positive answer, the legislation forbids a committee of this Legislature to look into that matter after the Conflict of Interest Commissioner has looked at it. No other piece of legislation in the province has ever forbidden a committee of the Legislature to look at a matter that is of concern to the citizens of Ontario.

I only hope that the minister, when he looks at the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, will construct a reasonable and meaningful piece of legislation, a piece of legislation which will in fact protect the public.

In conclusion I would like to say—

Hon Mr Scott: The definition is: If Normie can't get the document, the act's wrong. Right.

Mr Sterling: If I can speak over the interjections of the Attorney General, who is chagrined that I have brought these matters to light at this time—the press knows those two provincial acts are a farce—I only hope that the minister will in fact make meaningful pieces of legislation with regard to the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act when it is brought to this House.

NATIONAL CONSUMER WEEK

Mr Cousens: I just wish the government would listen to the member for Carleton, because he has some good advice for them. I would like to compliment the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations for finally recognizing consumers with National Consumer Week. Maybe at this point this government could do something to recognize the role played by our agricultural community in producing the food we eat and help it produce more at good prices.

Maybe the government could do something about the interest rates. If we are going to buy something and we have to borrow money—I know we have to borrow money—what is the government doing to help bring interest rates down? If it is going to be consumer week and the government wants to get buyers out there doing something, then it should help do something so the people can afford it without having to pay taxes and pay high interest. Let's do something together with the federal government and do something to improve it.

If the government wants consumer week, let's have Sunday as a day off instead of having a law that is not working. Here the government is saying, "Let's support the consumers," yet its laws and what it is doing are making a mess of this province.

ORAL QUESTIONS

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr B. Rae: My question is to the Minister of Housing. The minister received a 12-point action plan from the Basic Poverty Action Group, which has been organized to try to bring the world of poverty and food banks to an end. The first four points dealt specifically with housing, talking about the need for a commitment to new housing, a housing-first policy for all provincially owned land, protection of existing affordable housing and bringing in a land speculation tax.

When the minister received that from Rev Bill Major, executive director of the Downtown Churchworkers Association, he said to the good reverend, "The issues which you identified in your letter are not directly within my mandate." I want to ask the minister how he could deny that recognition of housing as a basic social right in this province is an essential part of his mandate. Why would he be trying to get out from under that most important obligation of his?

Hon Mr Sweeney: My recollection of my response with respect to that particular phraseology referred to the other parts of the letter, and certainly not to the housing components. The honourable member will be well aware of the fact that I have met with the Metropolitan Toronto coalition on a number of occasions for different reasons and have clearly indicated what this province is involved in with respect to non-profit housing, the use of government lands, affordable housing being built on those lands and the allocations we have made for co-op housing, municipal non-profit and private non-profit. All of those are clearly within my mandate, and I have discussed them with the coalition.

Mr B. Rae: If the Seaton plan is any indication of where this government is going when it comes to affordable housing, then I can say the government has clearly abandoned its obligations with respect to affordable housing. That is obvious; that is perfectly obvious.

I have a specific question to ask the minister. There are 71,000 people, or at least 41,000 households, now on the waiting list for financially assisted housing across the province. The vacancy rate across the province is 0.8 per cent, or four fifths of one per cent. We still have no commitment from this government in terms of the extension of the Homes Now program. Can the minister stand in his place today and give us a commitment that there will be new moneys available for the Homes Now program extending past 1993 so we will have new supply coming on stream well into the 1990s?

Hon Mr Sweeney: The honourable member rightly indicates the waiting list, but he ignores the fact that over the last four and a half years of this government we have put in excess of 60,000 affordable units on the market and that the other 30,000 of Homes Now are currently in process. Granted, a relatively small percentage is actually complete and in operation, but the bulk of it by far, I think, with the exception of about 2,000 units, has been allocated and is either under construction or under way in some form right at the present time. That will give us 90,000 units in this province by the year 1992-93, as against the 70,000 figure he mentioned, and correctly mentioned that particular figure.

With respect to Seaton, the honourable member will be well aware of the fact that when I announced that particular project I indicated there would be a significant affordable component. At the present time, all the provincial pieces of land we have put

on the market have had in excess of a 50 per cent to 60 per cent affordable component. Seaton will be no less than that.

1410

Mr B. Rae: The fact remains that when it comes to financially assisted housing in the province there is still an enormous, incredible waiting list. The minister knows it and every member in this House knows it, even in terms of the case work that each of us has to do.

My final question to the minister is this: He will know, because I am sure he has met with the Basic Poverty Action Group about this particular issue, that as a result of the Rupert Hotel fire in this city just a few short weeks ago there has grown a movement of people determined to effect a conversion of those buildings and rooming houses into non-profit and co-operative buildings. They will be operated on a non-profit basis so that we will be able to maintain standards and be able to ensure the safety of people who are living in rooming houses.

The last time the minister met with these groups, I understand, he told them there were no funds available for such conversions. I want to ask the minister today, can he stand in his place and ensure that people who are living close to homelessness, who are being affected by speculation in the downtown cores of many of our cities across this province, will be able to live in a place that is decent and that is not run on the basis of speculation but is run on a non-profit basis?

Hon Mr Sweeney: The honourable member may very well be able to say that we are not allocating sufficient resources, but let me share with him, as I have shared with his colleague before, that when this government took office, the total allocation for supported housing in Ontario was \$140 million. Today it is \$340 million, and by the end of 1992-93 it will be \$900 million. That is almost a fivefold increase. So the member can clearly indicate that we may not be doing enough, but he cannot say that we are not doing a very significant amount. I can also point out, as I have also told his colleague, that we are doing more in Ontario than all of the rest of Canada put together.

The other point I would make to the honourable member is that I have met with representatives of the Rupert Hotel Coalition and I have clearly indicated to them that we are prepared to work with them. I have assigned a member of my staff to work with their committee, to involve them in all of the resources that are available. I have indicated that the non-profit allocations and commitments that we are making to the Metro area can be used for this purpose. I have also indicated that we can use our low-rise rehabilitation program for that purpose. I have also indicated that we can use our convert-to-rent program for that purpose.

SOFT DRINK CONTAINERS

Mrs Grier: My questions are for the Minister of the Environment and they are about soft drink containers. Yesterday the minister confirmed that the major emphasis of his waste management policy was recycling and that the major prop in that policy was the blue box system. We know that when the ministry made a deal in 1985 with the soft drink industry that had it contributing to blue boxes, part of that arrangement was that soft drinks could be sold in aluminum cans. Since then, aluminum cans have generated about 42 per cent of the revenue from the blue box program. We have today received confirmation from the Recycling Council of Ontario that Coca-Cola, which is the major user of aluminum cans, is very likely in

1991 to switch back to steel cans. This means that half the revenue from the blue box program is gone.

Can the minister confirm on behalf of his government, seeing that this program is such a major plank in its policy, that if that revenue shortfall occurs there will be a commitment to make up the revenue from the ministry, not on the backs of the municipalities?

Hon Mr Bradley: The member has been waiting, I think, for about three years for an opportunity to attack the blue box program in Ontario. But the outstanding success of the blue box program has not allowed her to do so over that period of time, and the growing success—

Interjections.

Hon Mr Bradley: The member can get involved in dogma. The member can get involved in what she considers to be purity. What we are dealing with in this program is attempting to get as much of the material that would go either to incinerators or to landfills into those blue boxes. In fact, that is exactly what is happening.

What the member is talking about is approximately one per cent of the waste stream that is going into the blue box but, in addition to that, for household waste we also have another 13 per cent. So you are getting 14 times what you would otherwise get. In other words, we have a practical program that people from around the world are looking at—people who have tried other methods of dealing with waste and have abandoned them or are about to abandon them because they see the results we are getting. That is what we really have to look at in Ontario: What are the best results? Not politically what looks the best, because I know what looks the best politically. I have had it put to me many times and I know how attractive that is.

Mrs Grier: I suspect the minister would have been dreadfully disappointed if I had not asked the question and allowed him to get that off his chest. It was obvious he had been practising it for quite some time.

I have never attacked the blue box program. I have attacked a government that has one policy, recycling, and is content with a target of 14 per cent reduction in garbage instead of looking at reusing and reducing before it starts to recycle.

The minister announced in February, with the usual fanfare, that the grocery industry had come aboard the blue box program and Ontario Multi-Material Recycling Inc 2 was going to have a major contribution from the grocery industry. Can the minister tell the House whether his cave-in on the question of refillable bottles was in any way connected to that contribution and commitment from the grocery industry?

Hon Mr Bradley: The contribution, or the OMMRI 2 process, has been in discussion for a period of time, because the member, I remember, asked in the standing committee on estimates about this, whether we were going to have an OMMRI 2, and I indicated we would. Of course, there were a number of parties, including the newspapers of the province, that made major contributions, and others who made a contribution. We would expect that many more people are going to be coming on line making a contribution because of the fact that they are producing substances that ultimately—

Mr B. Rae: We are always looking for contributions.

Hon Mr Bradley: The New Democratic Party, says the leader of the NDP, is always looking for contributions, and we will send them over there.

What I find interesting about the other subject is, I can recall when there was an issue going on whether aluminum cans would be allowed in the box or would not be allowed in the blue box, but the members from Hamilton were extremely concerned about this because of the jobs in Hamilton. In fact, there was a provision in the beginning that aluminum cans could not even come on stream. Now the member is telling me—and I would be interested because I know the member for Hamilton East works hard on behalf of his constituents and he is a strong supporter of an industry which is so important to his community. I know very well that he would be speaking on their behalf. So I am interested to hear why the member would now be looking with chagrin—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs Grier: I am sorry, Mr Speaker, my leader advised me to use a word that I will not use.

Mr B. Rae: It is not recyclable.

1420

Mrs Grier: Suffice it to say that the minister's verbosity is designed to cover up the fact that his policy is totally dependent on the whim of a single industry, and if that industry pulls out, the blue box program is going to collapse and he is desperate to keep it going, at least until after the next election.

If this program is so wonderful and so widely accepted and so widely copied, can the minister explain and can he tell us what response he has made to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the municipalities being the agencies that implement the blue box program? At the AMO convention last August, no less than three resolutions were passed resolving that the provincial government be urged to put a refundable deposit on beverage containers, that a refundable deposit fee be instigated and that the government should prohibit the sale of non-refundable drink containers.

If it is such a wonderful program and so secure that it is going to go on for ever, can the minister explain this lack of support from the municipalities, which are the agents of this program?

Hon Mr Bradley: I find it interesting, because on the Recycling Advisory Committee, which made a unanimous recommendation to me on this—that is where this came from—the latest development is it said, in effect, you should put the emphasis where it is practical; that is, you cannot tell people how much they are going to sell but you can tell them what they must make available for sale, and that is the emphasis. There are municipal representatives on the Recycling Advisory Committee, there are environmental representatives on that, there are representatives from a wide field on that. They are the ones who recommended it to me.

I ask the member, when she is talking about the blue box program, is she going to scrap the blue box program in Ontario? Is that what she is telling the people of this province? I do not think so. I can tell the member that, overall, our recycling efforts will have close to \$55 million in this particular year. While we have achieved 14 per cent of household wastes now, our goals overall are 25 per cent by 1992 and 50 per cent by the year 2000. Those goals have in fact been adopted by environment ministers across Canada, so what the member is attacking is the best recycling program in North America.

Hon Mr Scott: Are there any other subjects you want to take up today?

PATRICIA STARR INQUIRY

Mr Brandt: I am almost encouraged to ask the Attorney General a question, he is in such a spirited mood, and perhaps I will. Since the Attorney General is so anxious to participate in the debate, I wonder if the Attorney General could indicate whether he has had an opportunity to look at a six-point program of recommendations that I made with respect to the Houlden inquiry, six points that I suggested to the government, through the Premier, that may be an adequate response to the problem that developed with respect to the Houlden inquiry and the Supreme Court decision.

Has the Attorney General in fact looked at those six points? Is his government prepared to act on any or all of them and, if not, does he have another alternative?

Hon Mr Scott: I have looked at them.

Mr Brandt: There were a number of questions and I expected a more spirited response from the Attorney General since he—

Interjections.

Mr Brandt: The Attorney General was so anxious to engage in debate today that I thought perhaps he would have something more substantive to say in connection with my question.

If in fact he has reviewed the six suggestions put forward, would he specifically respond to suggestion 3, which relates to the disposition of the evidence in the Houlden inquiry? Could he indicate to this House where that evidence is at the present time and who in fact has access to the evidence that was brought from the Houlden inquiry?

Hon Mr Scott: The material accumulated by the Houlden inquiry, I am advised, is under lock and key in the premises that were occupied by the Houlden inquiry.

Mr Brandt: If I might, going back to the problem that arises as a result of the Supreme Court decision, the Houlden inquiry has been determined by the Supreme Court to be disallowed as a result of the complications which we have in fact discussed in this House. It is the view of my party and of many people outside of this Legislative Assembly that in fact another response, in addition to the OPP investigation, is necessary in order to get to some of the very substantive issues that were being reviewed during the course of that inquiry. Is it the intention of the government of Ontario to do anything other than to hope this problem simply goes away, or is the Attorney General prepared to take any action along the lines of the six recommendations that I made?

Hon Mr Scott: As I have said to the honourable member on a number of occasions, the problem that is presented by the Supreme Court of Canada decision—and I think we had better understand that the Supreme Court of Canada decision changed the law with respect to royal commission inquiries in Canada—is that it will be extremely difficult, perhaps impossible, to conduct, under whatever terms of reference used, a criminal investigation in which allegedly accused persons have certain rights not to incriminate themselves at the same time as you conduct an investigation by royal commission in which there is no such protection. That is the dilemma the Supreme Court of Canada sought to grapple with.

At the present time, as the honourable member knows, a joint OPP-Metropolitan Toronto Police Force, I think, task force is engaged in examining questions of criminality that were before that commission. It has been ongoing for some time.

When the police make their report, we will be able to determine whether charges will be laid. If charges are laid, I have undertaken to the House on more than one occasion that they will be prosecuted as effectively and as vigorously and as quickly as we can possibly do so.

Mr Brandt: Well, that response did not get much applause from the Attorney General's side of the House, I notice.

[Applause]

The Speaker: Do you have a question, and to which minister?

Mr Brandt: I note that the applause is for my second question.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Brandt: I would like to direct my second question to the Premier. The Premier is aware, I believe, that the Alliance for Children's Mental Health held a press conference in which it pointed out very directly to the government that what I have been saying over the course of the past few days is correct, that there are some 10,000 children who are on waiting lists waiting for services that would be provided by a large number of agencies that provide assistance to these children, that the waiting list is running anywhere from six months to two years and that the problem is becoming increasingly critical.

Can the Premier indicate whether he is prepared to respond to the request on the part of the alliance that some immediate assistance be provided by the government to overcome the difficulties and the problems that are related to this lengthy and completely unreasonable waiting list for children's mental health services?

Hon Mr Peterson: I think the honourable Minister of Community and Social Services can assist the honourable member with respect to the initiatives of the government.

Hon Mr Beer: I am aware of the press conference that was held today by the Alliance for Children's Mental Health, and certainly I am aware of the remarks which my honourable friend and others made last week in the debate which was held in the Legislature. I would like to set out for the honourable leader of the third party a number of specific things that are ongoing which are intended to address the specific points made in the press conference. I also want to underline that I think it is important to understand the focus that we take on this issue. That focus is a somewhat broader one than specifically the problems in the children's mental health area, but looking at it more from the focus of the children's services sector.

There are real issues. The member raised them in his comments last week, as did members on both sides of the House, and we are not for a moment saying that those are not there. That is one of the reasons why in February I met with the executive of the Ontario Association of Children's Mental Health Centres, to look at some specific things that we could do in the short term, as well as talk to them about the Advisory Committee on Children's Services under Dr Colin Maloney, which is very hard at work and will be reporting to me in June with some specific proposals around where we go in the future. Now, we take it as being very—

The Speaker: Order.

1430

Mr Brandt: Over 1,500 professionals are appealing to the government to respond quickly, immediately, because of the

urgency of this particular problem. In the past, on other days in which we have engaged in a discussion on this same question, the minister has responded by saying that Canada assistance plan funding at the federal level has been reduced. The result of that is that there are fewer dollars available for these kinds of programs.

The minister is well aware that CAP disallows expenditures in this particular field. The responsibility is in fact provincial and the programs that they are asking be expanded or improved upon in order to reduce those waiting lists are a provincial responsibility.

The Speaker: The question?

Mr Brandt: The minister has constantly talked about reports that are to come, that will clear up the problem. The delays can no longer be allowed. I appeal to the minister, on the basis of the critical nature of the waiting lists—

The Speaker: Do you have a question?

Mr Brandt: When is the minister prepared to respond?

Hon Mr Beer: I am afraid that the honourable leader of the third party is simply wrong in the first assertion that he makes in his question. I would point out that out of the some \$165 million which we spent on children's mental health centre programs and the centres themselves last year, some \$35 million was recovered under the Canada assistance plan.

As the honourable member knows, that program has been capped at five per cent, and just two weeks ago I undertook, and have since done, to provide a five and a half per cent increase to all of our agencies, including children's mental health centres, which was an increase over what had been announced earlier. That was an immediate \$20 million that was being added to the system of the agencies within the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

What we have said is that all of the initiatives we will be taking this year—and these are specific things that we are dealing with now in terms of the salaries of front-line workers and in terms of the waiting list where I have people working full-time with the association on that particular difficulty. But I would again remind the honourable member that a number of the examples he has cited are ones, in terms of individual cases, that can be dealt with as well by other parts of the children's services sector, whether it is the children's aid societies or the family service associations. We have to keep in mind that this is a—

The Speaker: Order. I would remind the members this is not a debate; it is questions and responses. Now I will ask the member for a supplementary question.

Mr Brandt: Thank you for explaining how that works, Mr Speaker.

Stephen Lewis, who I do not frequently quote in this House, Canada's former ambassador to the United Nations, indicates that conditions for children who are in need of mental health treatment in Ontario are so bad that Ontario most likely does not comply with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Here we have the richest and largest province in the entire country in a position where our former ambassador to the United Nations has made, I think, a very insightful and very accurate observation, that our services for children who are in need of mental health treatment are totally inadequate. Does the minister think that is the kind of judgement he can accept on the part of his government, that we do not even come up to the

standards established for some Third World countries in terms of mental health programs for children?

Hon Mr Beer: No, I do not accept that. I would put our programs, the range and the gamut of programs in this province, against any other province in this country. We have, over the last four or five years, made significant inputs into the programs that we have, in developing and funding them. That does not mean that we cannot make more progress, but we have to understand that we have a very, very good system which we are seeking to make better.

I think, as I have said before, that with the thrust of our programs, with the work of the advisory committee, those will become better, but the reason that I continually raise the federal government's role in this is that the increase in these programs will be completely dependent on what the province puts in, whereas in the past those programs have been under the shared-cost emphasis of the Canada assistance plan. The \$35 million that we got last year from the federal government is what we will get.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon Mr Beer: We have already spent over the five per cent that they are going to allow, but we are going to be addressing the specific—

The Speaker: Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. There are quite a few other conversations going. I do not know if they are necessary.

Mr Allen: Back to the same minister on the same question: He may praise the system to the skies, but I wonder what he says about Michael Doesburg, who is 13 years old and suicidal. Last November, when they were searching for a children's mental health setting to have him looked after appropriately, he was admitted to Whitby Psychiatric Hospital, where he was supposed to stay for one month. He ended up there for four months with only custodial care assessment—no treatment. They tried to find places at C. M. Hincks Treatment Centre, the Hospital for Sick Children, the Children's Psychiatric Research Institute in London and Placement House, which is one of the minister's special services units. No luck. He is now at Thistletown Regional Centre for Children and Adolescents waiting for placement. He is drugged like a zombie, his parents say he is getting no treatment whatever and he is waiting now for an appointment a week from now with Hincks to determine what? Whether he will even get on a waiting list?

The Speaker: And the question?

Mr Allen: Does this young person have even a right to treatment? It would seem not in Ontario in 1990.

Hon Mr Beer: I think a number of examples, such as that, which have been brought to my attention and to that of other members, are ones that are not acceptable and are not things that we want to see in our system. That is precisely why we have moved, in working with the association, to look at the specific question of waiting lists and, equally important, to see whether there are individual young people on those lists who could be assisted in other ways within the community so that the children's mental health centres can deal most effectively with those kids who are most at risk and most in need. That is why, within my own ministry, I have taken on a specific person who will be working on that issue and that issue alone. That is to try to deal with the immediate short run. In addition, as we

look at changes in terms of funding for the base programs and other ways that we can help in terms of staffing, I believe we will be able to do that, and that will assist us as we go down the road.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon Mr Beer: Yes, there are some of those problems there, but I think that together with those centres we can address them.

The Speaker: Order. I would just like to give as many members as is possible an opportunity to ask questions and get responses, so if you could just keep them a little shorter, it would be helpful.

Mr Allen: It would appear that the minister has not seen, for example, the Windsor list, even a partial list of the children awaiting mental health services: a three-year-old traumatized by a house fire in which a relative was trapped inside, preoccupied with morbid or disastrous events and acting-out confusion daily; bizarre behaviours of a five-year-old—indiscriminate urinating, destructive, fire setting, sleep disturbances, witnesses extreme violence of mother in the company of relationships with abusive men; uncontrollable nine-year-old—steals, lies, screams, kicks, will not obey rules, has poor peer relations, tried to strangle younger sister with a towel—and on it goes.

These are, as I read the list, children who can be dealt with in less intrusive arrangements and other community settings than children's mental health centres. There used to be a universal right of access to treatment in legislation in this province for children and their families in these circumstances.

The Speaker: The question?

Mr Allen: When is the minister going to guarantee in law that right once more?

Hon Mr Beer: I think that we have set out in the Child and Family Services Act specific proposals around children's mental health. Let me go back again, though, to the fundamental question around the waitings lists and one of the issues that we are dealing with the association on, which is in terms of those who are on those lists—and I am not saying that I cannot deal specifically with the ones the honourable member has raised—where we have said that there are those on the lists who in fact could be dealt with by other parts of the children's services sector.

I think one of the ways that we can deal with that list is having a better way of determining where is the best place for the different individuals on that list. Indeed, we need to continue to improve that system, and that is precisely why we have put in place some of these other changes and raised and increased the budgets. But I think that if we focus only on the children's mental health centres per se, we are not going to deal effectively with the overall sector in ensuring that all children's need are met and that that sector is indeed properly funded.

1440

ABUSE OF THE ELDERLY

Mrs Cunningham: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. It is not just the young kids we are worried about today; it is the elderly as well. As the minister knows, we do not have regulations or guidelines from this government around the rest home situation. I know also that we have got some 30,000 or 40,000 people in these special homes. Some of them are being abused. We have read the stories in the last couple of months and we are not happy about it.

More recently, the report on the regulation of residential care facilities from his own advisory committee made some pretty strong recommendations for regulations, as did the response by the rest home committee of the Ontario Long Term Residential Care Association in response to his own government.

Given that all of us are having a lot of problems out there in our communities, and there has been in fact this response to his own report, is the minister prepared to tell us today in this House exactly when we will be able to look forward to those guidelines and regulations?

Hon Mr Beer: As the honourable member points out, there has been a great deal of discussion around the issue of abuse. The specific instance of elderly persons and the whole question of rest homes has been one which, up until this point in time, has been dealt with primarily through local bylaws. We as well have been concerned about this and how that area is regulated.

The member has indicated a number of reports that have come forward. We believe that one way we are going to be able to help in improving that is under the long-term care plan, which will provide a better means of assessing and placing people, but we recognize that there would be still be an issue in terms of how exactly to help people who are in those situations. I am looking at those recommendations, together with my colleague the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs, and will be coming forward at the appropriate time with specific proposals on that.

Mrs Cunningham: My supplementary has to do with the words "the appropriate time." Some of us have been around a lot longer than we like to admit, and this report was made in 1986 by my predecessor, Ron Van Horne. That is longer ago than some members want to remember. Those were the recommendations five years ago. Let's face it, we know that we have a hodgepodge of regulations out there, sometimes enforced by municipalities and sometimes not. It is not new. We have an aging population. We do not want to institutionalize them. We have a nice setting in rest homes. We know it is something we should be supporting. The minister talks about community-based care—let's do it.

"At the appropriate time" was the response, so my question is about long-term care—

The Speaker: That is fine, thank you.

Mrs Cunningham: We have been waiting a long time. Is it May, or is it June? When the report is released, will we have specific recommendations for the regulations that we are looking for?

Hon Mr Beer: The member will be seeing the long-term care initiative, I think, emerging very clearly as we proceed through this year. The document we have mentioned, the strategic document, will be released very, very shortly, within the next several weeks. That will, I think, provide a good indication of the areas we are intending to act on.

Specifically, around the question of elder abuse and our concerns about that, I think we are concerned about abuse across the board. Indeed, at this point in time, in terms of all our programs, I am looking at how we most effectively ensure the security of young people and seniors or anybody who is in our care. I believe that as we go forward with long-term care and these other programs, we will be able to address specifically the questions that the member raises.

NATIVE SERVICES

Mr Adams: My question is for the minister responsible for native affairs. The minister has, as I have, constituents who are native persons who live and work in his riding; that is to say, off-reserve. I know that the minister realizes that native people who work off the reserve pay both federal and provincial taxes. What services do these native people get for their provincial tax payment, bearing in mind that the federal government reimburses the province for native education, health and social service costs?

Hon Mr Scott: The honourable member undoubtedly knows, because he is conversant with native affairs matters, that until 1985 the view of the government of Ontario was that if it was on-reserve it was federal and if it was off-reserve it was provincial.

Since 1985—that was the year of change in Ontario—the view of the government of Ontario on native affairs matters has been different. We have begun to acknowledge the unfairness of discriminating against residents of Ontario even if they live on-reserve. Supported by the federal government, often in cost-shared programs, we provide a wide range of services to Indian people who live on-reserve, whether they work on the reserve or not. I do not know whether the honourable member wants a list of those now or will wait, but on the assumption that the Speaker is busy and I can go on a little while, I can tell him that we of course provide on-reserve policing services, we provide—

Mr Brandt: Handy list you have there.

Hon Mr Scott: —social services to adults and children, we provide a wide range of health care services, we provide employment and training, tourism and recreation and economic development services and education services.

The leader of the third party thinks I have this list just for today. I am so proud of the contribution that we make in this very difficult field where much remains to be done that I have it with me always.

The Speaker: Supplementary.

Mr Adams: I am very grateful for that complete response. As a result, I do not have a supplementary.

Mr Wildman: Parenthetically, someone once said, "The poor are always with us."

SAULT STE MARIE FAMILY SERVICES CENTRE

Mr Wildman: I have a question of the Minister of Community and Social Services. In view of the fact that he is going to be visiting Sault Ste Marie in the near future—tomorrow—can the minister inform the House as to whether or not he intends, during his time in the Sault, to visit the Family Services Centre? If he is, what assurances does he intend to give the centre that it will get the funding it requires in order to allow it to service the community and provide the programs of marital and family violence counselling for which it has a mandate?

Hon Mr Beer: The reason for my visit tomorrow is specifically to address a meeting that is bringing together those from across the north, parents of handicapped young people, and to look at various programs that we and they have and how they can be improved, particularly in the north. I will be meeting with a number of other groups during the day.

I can certainly tell the member that with respect to that specific issue, I know that we have been working with them on it. I do not have a specific answer at this point in time, but I will certainly ensure that, before I go up, I am briefed as to precisely where it is at and make sure to share with the honourable member the results of that information.

1450

Mr Wildman: I appreciate the minister's response and the fact that he is visiting the Sault. I am sure it will not be a waste of time, as some have indicated it might be.

I want to ask the minister specifically about the situation at the Family Services Centre in that Mr Rivard, the director, announced earlier this week that the centre is closing intake for family and marriage counselling because it has a 12-month waiting list for services. I wonder what the minister intends to do to ensure that this centre gets the funding it needs to be able to provide the counselling that is obviously badly needed in the Sault and area.

Hon Mr Beer: I know that a number of our agencies, as we have been discussing earlier in the session today, face difficulties around the growing demand for services and the resources that are available to meet those. I can tell the honourable member that I will review that specific situation. I think that what we are always trying to find here is a balance to ensure that we can provide services in the north that are similar and comparable to those in the south. Sometimes it does not work out as well as it ought to. I appreciate that this is an important service that is provided and I will review the situation and report back to the honourable member.

GREATER TORONTO AREA RAPID TRANSIT

Mr Cousens: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation. Last week I asked the honourable minister what his top three priorities were for the transportation development plans in the greater Toronto area, because it is urgent that we get on with these projects and begin to solve the crisis in transportation that we have in the greater Toronto area. He indicated that he had an implementation committee that will establish what the priorities are.

I asked the minister what the top three priorities were and he was not able to tell us last week. But he did indicate that there is going to be a special implementation committee set up within 10 days to begin that process. Ten days have now passed. Has he named the committee, who is on the committee and when it is going to meet?

Hon Mr Wrye: I am just so delighted that my friend asked me that question. The first meeting of the transportation implementation committee started one hour and 22 minutes ago and will go on for about another half an hour.

The committee will be meeting regularly under the chairmanship of my deputy minister. It contains the senior administrative leadership of GO Transit, the Toronto Transit Commission and all the regions of Metropolitan Toronto. There were about 15 individuals in the room, plus two or three of my most senior officials. I spoke to them at the beginning of the meeting and will be kept advised as to their progress.

We hope and expect that by this fall we will have an implementation timetable for this most ambitious plan anywhere in North America.

Mr Cousens: Very often I have great problems when we call it question period because I never get an answer. Today I got an answer, so I compliment the minister. I am not used to

any answers from these guys. It is an urgent priority that we get on with the task for the greater Toronto area transportation needs.

On this whole subject, the deputy minister for the greater Toronto area, Gardner Church, was quoted recently as saying that local municipalities will require some \$30 billion over the next 20 years to support growth. We all know that good transportation, infrastructure and planning must precede growth, or you end up having the kind of congestion that we are seeing now in the areas outlying Toronto itself. So we need a blueprint for growth that must include transportation planning.

I want to ask the minister what role Mr Church and his office are playing in the setting up of transit priorities for the greater Toronto area, so that we can begin to see how this additional \$30 billion is going to be spent.

Hon Mr Wrye: This is another question I am just delighted to answer. I am sure my friend the minister responsible for the greater Toronto area will not mind if I outline a little bit about Mr Church's responsibilities and how we are dovetailing transportation initiatives into them.

Mr Church is involved in looking at the longer-term issues in terms of the GTA and in developing exactly the kind of blueprint for the orderly growth of this very dynamic region. Those matters are going forward and the report will be completed within the next several months to a year.

We are completely involved in all of that planning, because transportation is such an important component of that initiative. We are involved at the deputy minister level and at the assistant deputy minister level with our most senior officials. I can assure the honourable member that what he saw was for the short-term and medium-term initiatives to keep Toronto and the greater Toronto area moving, keep it livable and make it the kind of place that we are all so proud of even today.

The longer-term initiatives will come forward, and I assure the honourable member that, under the leadership of the Premier and the Treasurer, and with my good friend the minister responsible for the greater Toronto area, the long-term vision will make the greater Toronto area the place in North America well into the next century.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr D. R. Cooke: My question is to the Minister of Labour. In March 1987 a very serious chemical fire took place in Kitchener. Since that time one firefighter who was at the scene has died of cancer, and a dozen police and firemen who were at the scene have developed some form of marrow bone cancer, liver disease or kidney disease.

According to our 1987 amendment to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, in October 1990 additional provisions dealing with the reporting of hazardous chemicals to medical officers of health and fire departments will come into effect. But I understand that there is a further amendment in Bill 208 which could weaken the measures brought forward under the previous changes in the bill because section 17 requires that the inventory and material safety data sheets will be provided to local authorities only when requested.

As a result of this serious and life-threatening potential, is the minister prepared to consider removing section 17 from Bill 208 and protecting the gains already legislated?

Hon Mr Phillips: I appreciate the question from the member for Kitchener and I realize his intense interest in the matter. In this particular case, we are attempting to make the provision of the information more helpful to the fire departments and the

medical officers of health. I think, as they looked at the provision that would require organizations to provide the data sheets as they come in on a regular basis, they were concerned they would be overwhelmed with paper.

What they have asked us to do is ensure that where they want the data, where they believe an organization should be providing the data or where they have any reason to suspect that they want the data, those data must be provided. But they have suggested to us that, rather than it being helpful to improving the service for their employees and for the public to get all the data all the time, they would prefer to get the data as they request them.

I might also add that where the Ministry of Labour inspectors believe the data are required by the fire department and the medical officer of health and they have not been requested, we can require that those data be provided. But it is our hope and intention that this amendment will be more helpful to medical officers of health and fire departments and more useful in terms of their being able to deal better with their employees and the public.

Mr D. R. Cooke: I accept that the minister's motives and my own are identical, but I wonder if the minister, in the circumstances, would review that policy to make certain that the information available to medical officers of health and fire departments is as immediate and concise as possible.

Hon Mr Phillips: Again, as I said, we are responding to requests by both fire departments and medical officers of health, but I can assure the member that it is our intention that they have the required information. If, as we have our experience in dealing with this, there is a need to amend it, we certainly will consider that. We are attempting to respond to their request and the information that they believe would be most helpful to them. We will review that on an ongoing basis.

GREATER TORONTO AREA RAPID TRANSIT

Mr Mackenzie: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation. The minister recently announced with great fanfare a \$5-billion package for subway and transit improvements in the Metropolitan Toronto area. It has been referred to earlier today. I am sure the minister is aware of the fantastic pressure on drivers travelling the Queen Elizabeth Way, in particular between Toronto and Hamilton.

The people of Hamilton would like to know when Hamilton will get its share of the funding and priorities so that we can deal with and step up the procedures in putting into place rapid transit right from downtown Toronto to downtown Hamilton and lessen some of this pressure. Can the minister report to us just what he is prepared to do?

1500

Hon Mr Wrye: I am very glad that the honourable member asked that question. I am certainly very sensitive to the kind of traffic congestion that he talks about. I came in by car this week; I drove in myself on Monday afternoon. I will be going home on the QEW tomorrow morning and will certainly see the traffic along the QEW at first hand.

As I believe I indicated in the announcement, but certainly in some of the specifics, we have a series of initiatives on the Oakville west line of GO Transit which will see us begin some additional work. The Waterdown station begins later this year and will be completed in 1992. We are hopeful to get to Hamilton, to the new facilities, by 1992. I should tell the honourable member in that regard that the environmental assessment report

is in and before the Minister of the Environment now. Some additional work on the Burlington station is beginning this year. There is a whole action planned for Oakville west.

As the member will know, part of the problem—and we continue to work with the railways—is that very congested rail corridor. One of the problems is that we have to lessen some of that congestion as we move to all-day service. The goal, and it will be met, is all-day service, peak and off-peak service, by the end of the decade all the way to Hamilton.

Mr Mackenzie: The minister has confirmed what we had heard, that the environmental assessment is in on his desk. Can I ask him when the other interested parties are going to see that report, which is certainly something the people in Hamilton would like to see? Can I also ask him if it is not a fact that if the improvements are not started until next year, it will be 1995 before we will complete the construction into Hamilton? Even the terms of the assessment study can change in that period of time, so there is concern.

Hon Mr Wrye: Both the member and I would agree that there is always concern that we move ahead as quickly as possible. The environmental assessment report has gone to the Ministry of the Environment. Our work has been completed in that regard. I want to move ahead just as quickly as I can.

I am sure the honourable member will know from reading the paper that my good friend the member for Hamilton Centre has asked a number of questions in this House and has been most aggressive in ensuring that we move forward in our service to the Hamilton area.

With some of the work under way in the Burlington station and some of the work under way in Waterdown—and I know it is not right into downtown Hamilton—we are moving that way just as quickly as possible. We will have the Waterdown facility open by 1992. We will hopefully be able to move forward additional service into Hamilton throughout the decade, so well before the end of the decade we will have both peak and off-peak hours. The most difficult challenge will be the off-peak challenge. That is because of the volume of rail travel in the area, which the member I am sure knows is among the most congested, if not the most congested, in all of Canada.

DISABLED STUDENTS

Mr Sterling: I have a question of the Minister of Education. The minister knows that today 51 elementary schools in Ottawa under the Ottawa Board of Education were vacated by some 1,300 teachers, who are on strike since provincial mediation failed last night. I was informed that the schools have asked the students to come to the schools, which are still open, but they have indicated to parents of disabled children that they should not bring their children to the schools. I would like the minister to comment on the legality of the schools discriminating against this one set of individuals versus the students who are normal and not handicapped.

Hon Mr Conway: I thank the honourable member for his question. I might add that my own colleagues on this side of the aisle from the national capital area have also communicated their concern about the situation within the Ottawa public school board.

As the honourable member will know, thanks to his government we have legislation that governs the relationship between school boards and their various teacher organizations. That process is in place here for the situation in Ottawa. I am very hopeful that under the aegis of the Education Relations Commission this situation in Ottawa will be resolved as soon as

possible in the interests of the students. I would fully expect that both parties, the board and the teacher representatives, would want to work very closely with the ERC to bring about a speedy resolution to this particular dispute.

Mr Sterling: Thanks to our government as well, there are certain rights granted to handicapped or disabled children. It seems to me that the parents of disabled children probably require the services of the school to care for their children when both parents are working perhaps more than the parents of children who are not disabled. I understand that the schools have not been closed and that this process has to be started, was started this morning, to close those schools. The schools are open.

I understand Bill 82 guarantees the parents of disabled children the right to take their children to the schools. How is the minister going to enforce that law and make certain that the bill which was passed by the former government, which guaranteed disabled children the right of access to those classrooms, is going to be enforced? What is the minister going to do to enforce it?

Hon Mr Conway: I will give the honourable member the assurance that the provisions of Bill 100, which govern these relationships, will be at work in Ottawa. It is my view that both parties will and must accept their responsibilities under that particular statute. The Education Relations Commission will monitor the development and will certainly advise me as to the situation, and I fully expect that the school board and the teacher leadership will discharge their responsibilities under that particular act of this Legislature and that both parties will be animated by the very best interests of all students concerned.

PETITIONS

HOSPITAL BEDS

Mr Brandt: I am pleased to table a petition signed by approximately 1,100 residents from the Ajax-Pickering area, asking that the government keep its commitment to provide additional hospital beds for the Ajax and Pickering General Hospital.

MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEES

Mr Philip: I beg leave to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Peterson Liberal government has decided to charge drivers in greater Metropolitan Toronto \$90 per year for a car licence plate while at the same time only charging residents in other parts of Ontario \$33 per year for identical licence plates;

"Whereas the same Peterson government has, in this year's budget, imposed other taxes and levies on the people and businesses of greater Metropolitan Toronto which will not be imposed on those in other parts of Ontario;

"Whereas these taxes, which are not based on income or profits, hurt seniors and others on fixed incomes;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario to express to the Liberal government our great disapproval of its policies of tax discrimination against the people of the greater Metropolitan Toronto area."

I have signed it.

The Speaker: I might remind the member of the standing order on how to present a petition. It is not necessary to do all the whereases; just explain the therefore.

CONSTRUCTION DE DEUX ÉCOLES

M. Poirier : J'ai deux pétitions : une première du Comité de parents et enseignants de Casselman demandant à l'Assemblée législative d'accorder la première priorité pour la reconstruction de l'école à Casselman ; et une deuxième pétition de l'Association des parents et enseignants de Saint-Viateur de Limoges demandant également que le ministre respecte la priorité numéro deux du Conseil des écoles catholiques de Prescott-Russell à voir à ce que leur école Saint-Viateur de Limoges soit reconstruite.

TRESPASS TO PROPERTY LEGISLATION

Mr Sterling: "To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We request that the Ministry of the Attorney General withdraw Bill 149, An Act to amend the Trespass to Property Act, which we believe is unnecessary and without mandate.

"While we respect the rights of minorities and youth, whom Bill 149 alleges to protect, we oppose the way in which the proposed legislation will erode the ability of owners and occupiers to provide a safe and hospitable environment for their patrons or customers.

"We are further concerned about the legislation's potential for increasing confrontation in the already difficult process of removing individuals who create disturbances on publicly used premises."

This is signed by 547 people. Added to the 3,548 names already, this brings the total number on petitions to 4,095 respecting their wish to withdraw Bill 149. I have signed the petition.

1510

REPORT BY COMMITTEE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE OMBUDSMAN

Mr Velshi from the standing committee on the Ombudsman presented the special report on Farm Q Ltd and moved the adoption of its recommendation.

The Speaker: Would the member have a statement?

Mr Velshi: No, Mr Speaker, I do not.

On motion by Mr Velshi, the debate was adjourned.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MUNICIPAL STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1990

Mr Sweeney moved first reading of Bill 152, An Act to amend the Municipal Act and certain other Acts related to Municipalities.

Motion agreed to.

Hon Mr Sweeney: Given the fact that I made an earlier statement, I would just remind my colleagues that this bill deals with open meetings and disposal of assets.

PUBLIC LANDS AMENDMENT ACT, 1990

Mr Haggerty moved first reading of Bill 153, An Act to amend the Public Lands Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr Haggerty: The purpose of the bill is to limit leases of public lands to 10-year terms, to prohibit the leasing of public lands to persons who are not Canadian citizens or corporations that are not Canadian-controlled, and to prohibit leases of public lands that would restrict local residents' access to a body of water.

NON-UNIONIZED WORKERS PROTECTION ACT, 1990

Mr Haggerty moved first reading of Bill 154, An Act respecting the Rights of Non-Unionized Workers.

Motion agreed to.

Mr Haggerty: The purpose of the bill is to provide a low-cost mechanism by which a non-unionized worker may obtain a review by the Ontario Labour Relations Board if the worker is discharged or otherwise disciplined for cause. At the present time a non-unionized worker who is dismissed or otherwise disciplined for cause may have no right of action against this or his employer, despite the fact that the discipline, having regard to all the circumstances, may be unduly harsh. This follows the Charter of Rights.

The bill provides a two-stage process for reviewing complaints involving unduly harsh discipline. Initially a labour relations officer would be appointed to effect a settlement that would be reduced to writing and would have to be complied with according to its terms. If no settlement is reached or if a settlement is not likely, the Ontario Labour Relations Board would inquire into the matter. The board, if satisfied that the complaint is justified, would have the power to make an order substituting such penalty as is just and reasonable in the circumstances.

ORDERS OF THE DAY TIME ALLOCATION (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on government notice of motion 30 on time allocation in relation to Bill 68, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance.

The Speaker: Are there any members wishing to participate? The member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos: Thank you very much, once again, Mr Speaker. There are so many motions currently before us, motion on top of motion on top of motion, that to avoid confusion, I guess mostly for my own benefit, about which matter we are debating here—we know we are not debating Bill 68, and that is clear, because the government does not want to debate Bill 68, so the government moved a motion, but then there is another motion on the floor too, the motion that was moved on 12 April by the Solicitor General, filling in for the government House leader, one of those siblings grim who we spoke about.

That motion said, "That the daily hours of meeting of the House be extended from 6 pm to 12 midnight on each sessional day following the adoption of this order up to and including Thursday 3 May 1990; and that this order shall take precedence over any standing order or other special order."

We in the opposition did not move that motion; the government House leader did, calling upon the Solicitor General to move that motion. We debated that motion back on Thursday 12 April. Members should remember this clearly, please. I dearly wanted to debate Bill 68. We are here to talk about legislation. I so much wanted to talk about the government's insurance

scheme and how bad it was, how flawed it was, how cruelly it treats taxpayers and drivers, and most sadly, innocent injured victims, but the government will not let us, the Liberals will not let us, because they brought a motion for time allocation. Even that motion for time allocation was interrupted on 12 April by this motion to extend the hours.

What it is important to understand is that the government, with its majority, unless the government is sensitive to the rights of the opposition, unless the government is sensitive to its obligation to make sure that the people of Ontario are represented here in this Legislative Assembly, then it just rewrites the rules day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, issue by issue.

Mr Philip: With all these motions it is hard not to be emotional.

Mr Kormos: One has a hard time avoiding becoming emotional, as has been pointed out, about this plethora of motions. So let's not forget that not only do the Liberals not want to debate Bill 68, but they appeared last Thursday 12 April to be unwilling to even debate this time allocation motion, because they brought in this crazy motion to extend the hours of the House to midnight. I had some difficulty understanding why even the Liberals would want to bring in that motion. That is the one we have not finished arguing yet. It is the one that is still out there on the floor somewhere, floating around, waiting to be placed back on the orders of the day by the House leader.

Let's get down to brass tacks here. Let's get down to the nitty-gritty. Let's say what we mean and mean what we say. The Liberals could be talking about anything they wanted to right now at Queen's Park. If they wanted to pass legislation—Bill 208, any other number of pieces of legislation—they could be placing that on the order list for the day and that would necessarily then have to be argued, have to be debated.

1520

It is the Liberals who control the ordering of discussion and debate. It is the Liberals who very specifically are fleeing, running from any discussion of the auto insurance legislation they want to pass, and they want to pass it dearly. Why? The Liberals want to pass this bad auto insurance legislation because the auto insurance companies want them to pass it. It is as simple as that.

For the briefest of time they deflected attention away from auto insurance and how bad it is by bringing in this motion to extend the hours to midnight. As I say, I wondered why even they would bring in that kind of motion, and then I realized that the Liberals were well aware that people across Ontario are watching what is happening here at Queen's Park on their cable television sets. They are watching their cable channels that broadcast the Queen's Park debates.

The reason the Liberals tried last Thursday to extend the hours of the House was so that we would have to debate this into the late hours of the evening when a whole lot of the people, who would otherwise be able to watch what is happening, would have to be in bed because they work for their living. Unlike politicians, there are a whole lot of people out there who have to get up at five in the morning to get to the factory or to the mine or out into the fields where they are getting them ready for spring planting. There are farmers and factory workers and miners and business people, entrepreneurs, whose working day does not start at 9 or 9:30 or 10 in the morning, but rather whose working day starts at 5:30 and 6, and 6:30 and 7 in the morning.

These good people would not be able to watch what is going on here in this assembly, here in this chamber, if those hours were extended. These good people would be denied the opportunity to witness the obscenity that is being imposed on the public of Ontario here by virtue of the Liberals ramming Bill 68 through this Legislature.

I am prepared to argue that motion to extend the hours to midnight; I am prepared to argue that passionately. But as I say, what happened is that this is just one of the many motions that are floating around out here, because the other motion, the one we are talking about today, the one moved by the Liberal House leader—you see, we would not have moved that motion because we want to debate Bill 68. We want to talk about the auto insurance legislation; the Liberals do not. To avoid talking about it they moved this motion that we are forced to debate right now.

That motion reads, "That, notwithstanding any standing order or special order of the House, in relation to Bill 68, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance, two sessional days shall be allotted to consideration of the bill in committee of the whole House."

When that motion says that, it does not really mean two days. You know as well as I do, Mr Speaker, that politicians have a pretty perverse sense of what a working day consists of. When this motion by the Liberals talks about two sessional days, they are really talking about two very short afternoons. They are talking about that period of time from around 3:15 or 3:30 in the afternoon until around six in the afternoon.

That is what a sessional day is to the Liberals who wrote this motion. That is what they wanted to restrict us to in discussion of Bill 68 and all those amendments that the Liberals were going to present in committee of the whole House, to clean up all the errors and drafting problems in Bill 68, and then the other 20 or so amendments that the Progressive Conservatives were going to present. There simply would not be enough time in that brief period of time in committee of the whole to even present the amendments.

One of the things that is important—I will say this once again—one of the things that is important to consider when we are discussing time allocation or closure or a guillotine motion, which is what this is called in the parliamentary colloquial, is the breadth and reach of concern across the province about the legislation, and that is to say that if it were trivial or modest legislation that was not of any real import to any number of people, then one would be hard pressed to argue as we have that the bill requires thorough consideration and thorough debate.

In assessing its impact on the community—I am of course talking about the provincial community—one of the things we have to do is look at the concern being expressed by people across that provincial community about this guillotine by the Liberals, this guillotining of the opposition.

There are people like Arthur Taylor in London, Ontario. Arthur Taylor telephones in to my office and says that he is disabled. When he is out on the street, out on the sidewalks, out in the public places, to get around he has to use a Sierra three-wheel mobility device. It is not his fault that he is disabled. Of course he wishes he were not, but he learned a long time ago that he is not going to be able to wish that disability away, and indeed Arthur Taylor from London has confronted that disability, meets it head on and copes as best he can, indeed copes admirably.

Arthur Taylor is a brave person and Arthur Taylor is very interested in what is happening here at Queen's Park with Bill 68, because Arthur Taylor wants Bill 68 to be debated. Arthur

Taylor from London wants Bill 68 to be canvassed in its entirety by this Assembly. He wants an opportunity to see and hear that being done, because his body is not what it used to be when he was younger; he needs that three-wheel mobility device to get around, but his mind is as sharp as could ever be.

Arthur Taylor wants an opportunity to see Bill 68 debated and Arthur Taylor wants to see these types of questions posed, the very sort of questions that the Minister of Financial Institutions is avoiding by virtue of this guillotine motion, this closure motion, this time allocation motion. Arthur Taylor specifically wants to know about the impact of the provisions in Bill 68 on disabled people, like himself and like thousands and thousands of others here in the province of Ontario.

If this closure motion passes, if the Liberals pass this closure motion that we are debating right now, we will never get a chance to ask the Minister of Financial Institutions about what Bill 68 is going to do to disabled people; we will never get that chance. Arthur Taylor is not alone. He wants that issue raised. He wants the minister confronted.

I tell members that it is Arthur Taylor's right as a citizen of this province, as a voter, as a taxpayer and as someone who is as likely to be a victim of a careless, negligent or reckless driver as you or I or anybody else in this Assembly. It is his right to hear a thorough debate of Bill 68. It is in Arthur Taylor's right to see legislation that is going to impact on him and others like him debated, and to hear it debated.

The Minister of Financial Institutions and the Premier of this province want to deprive Arthur Taylor of that right, just like so many other rights that are going to be stripped from citizens in this province if Bill 68 gets passed. You have never seen a gang like these Liberals with so much disdain for the most basic rights of just plain, old, ordinary everyday people.

1530

This Liberal gang here at Queen's Park thinks that the auto insurance companies have a whole lot of rights. This Liberal gang here at Queen's Park thinks that the auto insurance companies have the right to make billions and billions and billions of dollars in profits on the backs of innocent injured victims. That is what these Liberals here at Queen's Park believe.

The Liberals at Queen's Park believe in rights for the auto insurance industry and they are prepared to strip the taxpayers of another \$143 million in the first year alone to make sure that those rights of the insurance companies are upheld, but they do not give a tinker's damn for the rights of taxpayers. They do not give a tinker's damn for the rights of taxpayers, or for the rights of innocent injured victims. They do not give a tinker's damn for the rights of drivers, the right to have affordable auto insurance. That is why these Liberals here at Queen's Park want to pass Bill 68, so that insurance premiums can go up for most drivers by as much as 50 per cent and, for almost a third of a million drivers here in Ontario, premium increases of up to 80 per cent.

So the Liberals at Queen's Park think a whole lot about the rights of insurance companies, but they think nothing, they think not at all, they do not give a damn for the rights of taxpayers, drivers and victims here in the province of Ontario, or for the rights of fine gentlemen like Arthur Taylor out in London.

Elvira Virelli from here in Toronto called me at 3:15 this afternoon, just 15 minutes ago. She left a message: dismay, she expresses, at the Ontario government for trying to push Bill 68 through, and congratulations to us in the opposition for all our efforts on behalf of the people of Ontario. Once again, when

Elvira Virelli says that, she raises the clear prospect that we in the New Democratic Party are not here fighting for the auto insurance companies.

The auto insurance companies are big, wealthy and powerful. We do not see ourselves as advocates for the auto insurance companies. The Liberals fulfil that role quite thoroughly. But I will tell the members this: We will fight for senior citizens; we will fight for working people; we will fight for students. We will fight for them because we are not concerned about—

Mr J. B. Nixon: You will sell out as soon as you can. You sell everyone out for power. The only people you won't sell out are the trade unions because you are their puppet. That is what you said in committee.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: We are not concerned about an auto insurance industry that has a government in its back pocket, the Liberals here at Queen's Park, but we are concerned about the taxpayers, the drivers and the innocent injured victims in Ontario who are going to suffer by Bill 68.

Mr J. B. Nixon: You are a puppet of your masters, as you said in committee.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: To Ms Virelli, we say thank you.

Mr J. B. Nixon: Disabled advocacy groups support it. You should have that on the record.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for York Mills.

Mr J. B. Nixon: Mr Speaker, you should have it on the record.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr D. R. Cooke: What about the innuendo against the government? That is disgusting.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I appreciate that.

Mr D. R. Cooke: You've got the Speaker in your back pocket.

Mr Kormos: What a dumb thing for a Liberal member to say about the Speaker's chair.

Mr D. R. Cooke: I withdraw that.

Mr Kormos: In any event, it is important for us to consider that people like Elvira Virelli would phone in with her concern, because that is part of the consideration that we have to keep in mind when we deliberate on this time allocation motion.

It is people like Arthur Martin from Peterborough. He called at 3:20 this afternoon, 12 or 13 minutes ago, with a message of sincere appreciation for the work that we in the opposition are doing to fight Bill 68 and to fight this time allocation motion.

Once again, we are not just talking about people from one part of Ontario or another part. We are talking about people from all over Ontario who are witnesses to this effort on the part of the Liberals to muzzle the opposition. The fact that it generates and has generated such thorough and across-the-board concern should be of concern to us.

That is what makes these messages very relevant. So you see, those people who call my office here at Queen's Park at 965-7714—I thank them for their calls, and I know you do, Mr Speaker. I know all of the people in this assembly thank them for their telephone calls and their messages.

I tell you this—this is a very personal statement—that if I were not receiving these phone calls to my office here in Toronto at 965-7714, I do not think I could carry on with this argument. If people were not calling me at 965-7714 here at Queen's Park, like so many have yesterday and today, I believe I would have to sit down. I believe I would have to sit down and let the government just take over—

Mr J. B. Nixon: Why don't you ask for a donation? Just ask for donations.

Mr Kormos: —let the Liberals take right over and ram their crummy legislation through.

Mr J. B. Nixon: The problem is he listens to the trade unions. That is what he said in committee.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please, the member for York Mills.

Mr Kormos: If I did not get these calls, these messages, I would not be able to make the argument against the jackboot tactics of the Liberals. Because these calls and these callers are active participants right now in a process that is so valuable and so dear to all of us in Canada and in Ontario. These people, these hundreds and hundreds of callers who have been calling my office at 965-7714 here at Queen's Park—and, my goodness, we are proud to be able to talk to them. We are proud to be able to hear what they have to say, and we are proud to be able to come into this assembly and tell the other members of this Legislature what these people have to say, these good people from across Ontario.

These people are participating actively in a fight, in a resistance to an effort on the part of the Liberals here in Queen's Park, here in Toronto, to wipe out a century of parliamentary tradition. So each and every one of those people who have called us and have called my office here at Queen's Park can be also very proud of themselves because they have participated in a fight for democracy.

People like John Murray from Beaverton. Once again, as I tell you, the concern over what the Liberals are doing is widespread. John Murray from Beaverton wants to know how he can get in to watch the proceedings of the House. He is prepared to come down here to Toronto to watch, live, what is happening here so that he can lend his presence to the fight against what the Liberals are doing to drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims with Bill 68 here in the province of Ontario. So John Murray from Beaverton knows, like so many others do now, that it is a matter of simply coming here and we will get him the best seat in the House if we can.

People like Rosalind Dickens from Oakville. She phoned in today. Ms Rosalind Dickens phoned in with support for our opposition to Bill 68.

1540

It is so important that the Liberals not be permitted to ram this legislation through. It is so important that the Liberals not be permitted to muzzle the opposition.

The bottom line is that this is the Premier of Ontario's legislation. The Premier of Ontario is ultimately accountable for this legislation that is being imposed on the drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims of Ontario. People across Ontario

are saying no way to Bill 68. Let them call the Premier at 965-1941 and tell that to the Premier right here at Queen's Park, and those people who do not live in Toronto should be calling collect.

Let me show you what happened yesterday, Mr Speaker. Let me illustrate for you the disdain that the Liberals have for the people of Ontario. We know that yesterday people were encouraged to call the Premier's office here at Queen's Park, 965-1941. You know that, Mr Speaker. People were encouraged to call the Premier of Ontario at his very personal office at 965-1941. Well, those people, according to the messages we received, were not being treated very well, and I tell members, it shows the disregard that even the Premier's office has for people in Ontario.

One message that we got was that "a snotty secretary said that the Premier was not available for those kinds of calls." Can you believe that, Mr Speaker? Can you believe that a caller, a citizen of Ontario, a taxpayer, a voter, the very same kind of voter who is concerned, as I am, about this time allocation motion would attempt to call on the telephone his or her Premier and that the Premier's staff member, described by that same person as a snotty secretary, said that the Premier was not available for those kinds of calls?

Mr J. B. Nixon: Speaking of snotty.

Mr Kormos: Let me tell you this. I bet you dollars to doughnuts right now, Mr Speaker, that the president of Allstate or Co-operators or any other number of auto insurance companies gets put through to the Premier. I bet you the Premier's staff is not snotty with the president of a major automobile insurance company in Ontario. No way. I bet you the Premier of Ontario is available for those kinds of calls, is he not? Because those are the guys who pay some of the bills at election time, like they did to the tune of over \$100,000 last general election here in Ontario. It is true. The auto insurance paid over \$100,000 to Liberal candidates for their campaign chest in the last general election in 1987.

All in all, I suppose there is nothing wrong with receiving donations. I was blessed in Niagara with a whole lot of support, financial and otherwise, from trade unionists.

Do members want to know something? I am proud to be here at Queen's Park fighting for the rights and interests of working people. Are the Liberals proud to be here at Queen's Park fighting for the rights and interests of big, powerful, wealthy automobile insurance companies?

Mr J. B. Nixon: How about the legal contributions you got? How about your lawyers' contributions?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: The Premier's staff is snotty to workers in Ontario. I bet the Premier's staff is not snotty to the presidents of auto insurance companies. No. That staff person would not last very long at all, would she?

Mr J. B. Nixon: I bet you are just snotty to everyone but your trade union masters, is that it?

Mr Kormos: I love it. We are getting close to a nerve again. They should bring on the Novocaine; it is going to be a bumpy ride.

The concern about this closure motion stretches from Niagara to Windsor to Ottawa to Barrie. That is why Mrs Marianne Butterworth from Barrie phoned us to tell us to please convey her opposition to Bill 68 and the closure motion to this Legislative Assembly, and we do that with pride.

Mr Speaker, as I tell you, if it were not for people like Mrs Butterworth calling my office at 965-7714, I could not carry on this argument against Liberal arrogance and against Liberal superciliousness. I would have to sit down were it not for the people of Ontario calling my office here at Queen's Park with words of encouragement. It is on behalf of those same people that we keep on fighting this fight.

People like Rob West, who, I should say, is a good friend of mine from St Catharines, the head of the St Catharines and District Labour Council. He called on behalf of some 15,000 affiliated members down there in St Catharines and the Niagara Peninsula.

Rob West is a good friend of mine and one of the finest people you will ever meet, one of the finest labour leaders you will ever meet and one of the finest members of the community you will ever meet. Rob West is a guy who is not beholden to any insurance companies, but he feels awful strongly about the rights of working people. Rob West would not lift a finger to fight for the auto insurance industry. He knows that they have gouging drivers and victims in this province for a long, long time and they have all the help they need in the form of Liberals.

I thank Rob West, the head of the St Catharines and District Labour Council, for calling in on behalf of some 15,000 affiliated members who he says are totally opposed to the closure motion.

I am proud that Rob West is my friend. I am proud that Rob West is the head of the St Catharines and District Labour Council.

Mr J. B. Nixon: How come women are never heads of trade unions?

Mr Kormos: The only thing that is sad is the fact that the government in Ontario, the Liberals, are not interested in listening to the workers. They are not interested. The government of Ontario, the Liberals here at Queen's Park are not interested in listening to the 15,000 affiliated members of the St Catharines and District Labour Council.

Mr J. B. Nixon: The NDP and trade unions are the last bastion of male domination. And Rob West is part of that conspiracy.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please, the member for York Mills.

Mr Kormos: Once again, root canals are always painful and we can expect a little bit of squawking and squealing from the patient, but it is a matter of touching a nerve. The pain could be made so much more temporary if only the House leader would stand up and withdraw this motion. If only the House leader would stand up and withdraw this time allocation motion, we could sit down and then we could start talking about Bill 68, which is all we ever really wanted to talk about.

Let me tell this House, the last thing in the world I ever wanted to do was have to fight Liberal jackbootism. It is a sad day when the debate in Queen's Park descends into a debate over democracy rather than a debate over the issues. What has happened here is that the Liberals are trying to snuff out democracy.

Alfred Emsley from Sunderland called in to say he is very pleased with what we are doing and to keep up the good work.

T. Kitagawa—and I hope I am pronouncing that right—called to say that he is opposed to Bill 68, that it is crummy legislation. He is opposed to the closure motion and he wants us to keep up with this fight against it.

As I say, if it were not for the people like T. Kitagawa calling me, I would not have the strength to carry on with this argument, this debate. I would not have the desire. The fact is that these people from across Ontario have been good enough and kind enough to call, and that is what makes me all the more committed to fighting this Liberal closure motion, to fighting jackbootism. Whether it is by the Liberals here at Queen's Park or whether it is by the Tories on Parliament Hill, we fight that because we—

Ms Bryden: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I do not believe we have a quorum.

The Deputy Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1552

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum is present. The member for Welland-Thorold may proceed.

Mr Kormos: Here is a wonderful letter just faxed up from my constituency office in Welland. This illustrates why we oppose Bill 68 and why we oppose this time allocation motion. As I say, it is the letters like this and the comments like this that are important to consider, because ultimately this assembly gets to vote on this time allocation motion, when I am finished making my arguments and the other members of my party, the New Democratic Party, are finished making their arguments, at some point, unless the House leader withdraws his motion, which would end this right here and now. Really, in some respects, this is entirely within the control of the House leader. The House leader for the Liberal Party is trying to generate an image of somehow it is beyond his control. On the contrary, all he has to do is withdraw this motion, and I would have to sit down. There would not be any more motion to speak to.

Deborah A. Buckner—there are a lot of Buckners down in the Welland area where I come from, down in the east end, the Cooks Mills area. It is an old family; I think they are United Empire Loyalists; but a good, hardworking family. Deborah A. Buckner, from Mallah Drive in Sarnia, wrote a letter to me down at my constituency office in Welland. The constituency office received it today and just faxed it up to me. She writes:

"May I first say, if I could give my strength and patience so you could speak for as long as it is going to take to delay the vote, I would send it to you today. I also wish I could block all the TV stations and make the people of Ontario watch the parliamentary channel."

She must have a grudge against somebody, because really, at some points in time, people watching this parliamentary channel must throw their hands up in dismay at the disregard that the government has for rules and procedure and for tradition. People watching this must shake their heads, saying, "What's going on at Queen's Park that the Liberals would not permit discussion and full debate about Bill 68?"

But Deborah Buckner applauds us on our stand on Bill 68. She believes, just as I do, that Bill 68 should become an election issue, that really the people of Ontario should constitute the ultimate jury. Let the government call an election right now. Let the electorate, let the voters of Ontario decide Bill 68, because do members know what the Liberals would learn real fast? The Liberals would learn that drivers can vote, but insurance companies cannot. All the money in the world from the insurance companies is not enough to buy off the people of Ontario, because the people of Ontario have seen the track record of the insurance industry.

Hon Mr Ward: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I do not believe the member is speaking to the motion that is on the floor, which is a time allocation motion.

The Deputy Speaker: Would the member stick to the motion, please?

Mr Kormos: Of course, Mr Speaker. Thank you. And of course I thank the House leader for his interjection. I appreciate that it is so frustrating for the House leader and for others participating in this debate that, to make any apparent contribution, they have to stand up on a point of order. So I understand why they would feel compelled from time to time to rise and make a point of order, be it frivolous or not.

At the same time, it is important, I suppose, that all of us are reminded from time to time of what we in fact are talking about here. We are talking about a time allocation motion that is really the jackbootism of the 1990s. We are talking about a time allocation motion, a closure motion, if you will, that has become a habit with the Tories up at Parliament Hill and is becoming a similar addiction to the Liberals here at Queen's Park. It basically comes down to when they know they have to pass an unpopular bit of legislation because of a particular interest group having such power—here I am, of course, talking about the auto insurance industry—they want to avoid debate about it, because all debate is going to do is make them squirm.

Hon Mr Ward: Mr Speaker, I wonder if the member will permit me to ask a question with regard to that. If he wants an amendment, or if he would like to suggest that the motion be changed to allow for additional time, he should say so.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I tell you, it is not unusual to see the Liberals jump up. Their jackbootism is equalled only by their jack-in-the-boxism.

Mr J. B. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It is quite clear under the standing orders that a member is not to unduly repeat himself. We have heard for uncountable, innumerable times a repetition of what this motion is about and his imputing motives to the members of this Legislature, which, once again, violates the standing orders of this House. I would urge you, Mr Speaker, to call this member to order or terminate him, put him out of his misery, so that we do not have to listen to the continuous breach of the rules of order.

The Deputy Speaker: The member will address the motion.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will tell you that to this extent, obviously, some people have not been listening. And when they do not listen I feel compelled to repeat a particular point, because sometimes a point is so germane to the matter at hand that if one does not understand that one cannot really move on from that point to subsequent issues. So for the benefit of the Liberals here, for whom I am trying to outline some commonsensical arguments, it is important for all of us, because ultimately we are going to have to vote on Bill 68 and on this time allocation motion.

The House leader seems unprepared to withdraw it, at least today. Perhaps he will some time next week or the week after—I am not sure—but so far today I have not been able to persuade him to withdraw the motion. So it remains then that we have to look at one of the considerations, and we get right back down to where we were a few minutes ago. Sometimes I wonder who is delaying these proceedings. It is these jackbooters with the

jack-in-the-box syndrome jumping up all the time who simply prolong this and make it longer than it has to be.

So if they would just sit down, calm down, be quiet for a minute and listen, this whole process is going to be speeded up and be a lot briefer than it would be otherwise. People like Deborah Buckner from Sarnia—she says she is sick and tired of being a proverbial frisbee and being tossed around and stepped on, both through the Bill 68 issue and the GST.

1600

There you go, Mr Speaker. Taxpayers and voters in Ontario see the abuse imposed upon them by the Tories in Ottawa by way of the GST being equalled by the abuse imposed upon them by the Liberals here at Queen's Park with Bill 68. Look what is happening. Taxpayers, voters and members of our provincial community are sick and tired of the abuse being heaped on them by way of the GST at the instance of the Tories. They say that abuse is being paralleled by the victimization to which they are being subjected by the Liberals right here in Toronto at Queen's Park, by virtue of Bill 68.

She condemns the Liberals for their disregard for time allocation motions, their disregard for the opposition that is inherent in this time allocation motion, in this closure motion, in this guillotine.

Hon Mr Ward: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member, on many occasions, has made reference to the fact that the time allocation motion does not provide enough opportunity for him to debate the issue. If he would like to suggest how much time he would like, I would be quite prepared to consider bringing in another motion with the appropriate amount of time that would suit him.

The Deputy Speaker: That is not a point of order.

Mr D. S. Cooke: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: If the government House leader is interested in that, then perhaps he should withdraw this motion and we can talk about it. But the first step would be to withdraw this motion.

The Deputy Speaker: These are not points of order. If members want to discuss these things, there are ways and other channels to discuss it rather than points of order.

Mr Kormos: Young Neil, one of our new pages here, just brought me a few more messages. They are bringing them down as they are coming in. This is from Bob Buck in Willowdale. He does not belong to any party. I suspect he is about as cynical and frustrated by politicians as most people are in this province and in this country. He opposes Bill 68 because it is discriminatory. Bob Buck from Willowdale is on track. His head is on straight.

Jess Parker from here in Toronto just called up to say that he is opposed to Bill 68. He said, "Thanks for standing up for the little guy." Remember, Mr Speaker, what Mr Justice Haines said about Bill 68? Mr Justice Haines said that if the Liberals pass Bill 68 there is going to be the very distinct impression here in Ontario that the government, the Liberals, sold out the little guy so that the insurance companies could make big, big profits. Jess Parker from Waller Avenue in Toronto is saying, "Thanks for standing up for the little guy." You know what, Mr Speaker? We are proud to be able to fight these Liberals over this time allocation motion and over Bill 68.

Cathy Richards from Toronto phoned us this afternoon at 3:45, just 15 minutes ago, to say that she supports us and that Bill 68 is the equivalent of the GST being rammed down people's throats. That theme is starting to appear more and

more, is it not, that Bill 68 is the provincial equivalent of the GST, that the Liberals and Bill 68 are but clones of the Tories and the goods and services tax coming out of Ottawa, and both have to be defeated. Both the GST and Bill 68 have to be defeated.

What we need is a meaningful and thorough debate over Bill 68. This is why time allocation is inappropriate and has to be voted against. We need the opportunity to persuade some 35 Liberal backbenchers—that is all we need—to vote against Bill 68. You know that, Mr Speaker? If 35 Liberal backbenchers who want to keep their ridings in the next general election would vote against Bill 68, it would not matter then what the Premier does, or what the Minister of Financial Institutions does, or what the member for Guelph does. If 35 Liberal backbenchers voted against Bill 68, what they would be saying to their communities is: "I'm prepared to represent my constituents, but I'm not prepared to represent big, wealthy, powerful automobile insurance companies. I don't care how much money they donate to the Liberal Party at election time."

That is why I am opposing this time allocation motion and that is why I am arguing against it as carefully as I can, because we need an opportunity, in debating Bill 68, to persuade those same Liberal backbenchers to speak out for their constituents and stop speaking out for the auto insurance industry.

Suzanne and Doug Green from Woodstock, in the kindest of words, phoned in at 3:46 this afternoon to say, "Congratulations on doing a great job and on being a good politician"—150 per cent support for me. I appreciate that coming from Suzanne and Doug Green down there in Woodstock.

It is these telephone messages coming into my office, people who call 965-7714, that give us the energy and the fuel to carry on this fight against closure, against time allocation.

Stuart Millar in Hamilton called in at 3:50 this afternoon and called this a disgusting bill. He has been watching for weeks. He says the opposition is doing a good job.

Once again, Mr Speaker, look at this connection between the GST and what the Liberals are doing here in Ontario. Mr Millar is ready to leave the whole country. Once again, look at the connection, look at the parallel people are drawing. The Conservatives up on Parliament Hill are trying to ram the GST, the goods and services tax, through that parliamentary body. And they are using closure. The Tories on Parliament Hill are using time allocation and closure to ram the GST through, just like the Liberals want to use time allocation and closure to ram Bill 68 through this assembly.

Do you know what, Mr Speaker? New Democrats up on Parliament Hill have been fighting the Tories tooth and nail over the GST. We New Democrats here at Queen's Park are going to keep fighting the Liberals tooth and nail over Bill 68. I tell you that, Mr Speaker, and I tell people like Stuart Millar from Hamilton. Mr Millar, thanks for calling. Mr Speaker, I am pleased to be able to convey his message on to you, but I say to Mr Millar, let's fight the next election on the auto insurance issue, on the Liberals' taxation policy, on the Liberals' abandonment of the public when it came to free trade and on how they are going to abandon the public and the taxpayers here in Ontario when it comes to the GST. What we are looking at here when we are looking at the Liberal ranks here at Queen's Parks is but clones of their Tory cousins on Parliament Hill.

The Deputy Speaker: Are you still talking about the time allocation motion?

Mr Kormos: Yes, sir. Because the Tories on Parliament Hill have been using time allocation, have been using closure time and time again.

Bob Black from North Bay called in this afternoon. I am going to be speaking in North Bay tomorrow night, Friday evening, about auto insurance. Perhaps Mr Black and his family will come out and say hello. He says that what the opposition is doing is tremendous. He says to tell the Liberals that they do not have any divine right to rule. Bob Black from North Bay is quite right. People like Bob Black, who called today from North Bay, are going to let the Liberals know that in the next general election.

Neil Stevenson from Elliot Lake called this afternoon. He is a senior citizen. He says no way to the Liberals' no-fault.

Jim Briggs from Bronte calls. He is watching this debate. People are watching what is happening, Mr Speaker. That is how important this debate is to people across Ontario. The fact that they are watching should illustrate to you and to every member of this assembly that the people in this assembly are obligated to vote against time allocation, that the people in this assembly, if they are going to serve the interests of their constituents, should be voting no to time allocation and then no to Bill 68.

Jim Briggs from Bronte says that he appreciates what the opposition is doing and that the government has been protecting insurance companies for years and keeps on doing it with Bill 68. Jim Briggs from Bronte wants a full debate on Bill 68. I am sure he is wondering why the member for Guelph, the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions, will not ask his House leader to withdraw this time allocation motion. Why will the member for Guelph not do that? Why does the member for Guelph persist in running from a full debate over Bill 68?

1610

Jim Beesack from Brampton South calls up this afternoon. He is watching what is happening. He has a question. He has a simple question to ask of the member for Guelph or perhaps the Minister of Financial Institutions or perhaps the Premier of Ontario. Jim Beesack from Brampton South asks this question: If the government thinks that Bill 68 is so good, why does it not want to talk about it in the House so that it can convince people it is good legislation?

If the government thinks Bill 68 is so darned good, why does it want to restrict debate on it so that it can never be meaningfully debated by any of the members of this assembly? If the government thinks Bill 68 is so good, why will the member for Guelph, the parliamentary assistant, not tell the House leader to withdraw this time allocation motion right now? The minute this time allocation motion is withdrawn, the sooner we can start talking about Bill 68. The minute the time allocation motion is withdrawn, I lose the floor with respect to this particular discussion. It is as simple as that.

Jim Beesack from Brampton South, I appreciate your calling. I know you do, Mr Speaker, because I know that his comments make a valuable contribution to this debate about time allocation. I tell Jim Beesack that I appreciate his calling my office at 965-7714. Perhaps Mr Beesack and others watching would call the Premier's office at 965-1941. I hope they call the Premier. The Premier of Ontario is right here at Queen's Park, and those people calling should not take any snotty guff from the Premier's staff.

Connie Quinn from Clara Street in Thorold, what a brave lady, because she has got a back injury now as a result of an

irresponsible and negligent driver. She was hit from behind. She knows that if Bill 68 were law, if we were not engaged in this debate and if we were not able to slow down the passage of Bill 68 and if Bill 68 had already been passed, she would not receive a penny in compensation for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life.

She would not receive any compensation for not being able to pick up her children because of the pain and the diminished strength that she suffers as a result of that tragic injury. Connie Quinn, an innocent injured victim, under Bill 68 would receive not a penny in compensation for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life as an innocent injured victim.

Connie Quinn is a brave lady. She is living with pain, with the reality of being unable to pick up her children and carry them and play with them, with the reality of being less of a mother than she would want to be. She is an innocent injured victim. The Liberals and the insurance industry here in the province of Ontario would desert Ms Quinn and would leave her without a penny in compensation for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life.

That is why we are fighting this time allocation motion, so that we can fight Bill 68 as vigorously as we are fighting this time allocation motion. Connie Quinn deserves our thanks, all of our thanks, for calling in and sharing some of her tragic personal experience with all of us.

Ken Morgan from Manitowadge calls. Mr Morgan says the opposition is doing a great job in the Legislature during these debates and he extends his congratulations. The message here from people like Ken Morgan up in Manitowadge is that this debate is crucial because this time allocation motion is such a serious, thorough threat to tradition, procedure, such a serious, through threat to basic fairness.

That is what Ken Morgan from Manitowadge called to say. Ken Morgan from Manitowadge called me and I appreciate his call. He picked up the phone and called us at area code 416-965-7714, to congratulate us for the job we are doing in the Legislature on this debate. Ken Morgan from Manitowadge should maybe call collect to the Premier, area code 416-965-1941, and tell the Premier of Ontario that too.

Robert Cousineau from here in Toronto calls up. The concern about this motion is not just from Manitowadge, it is not just from Sarnia, it is not just from Thorold and Welland; it is from here in Toronto as well. Mr Cousineau calls—

The Deputy Speaker: Did I hear correctly? The concern for this motion.

Mr Kormos: Yes. Calls from Manitowadge, Sarnia, Toronto. Mr Cousineau calls and says the opposition is doing a terrific job. He talks about the indifference of the government to innocent injured victims. He talks about how they are going to be creating a system with Bill 68 that is going to be worse than this Liberal government's workers' compensation system. Robert Cousineau from Toronto knows that this debate over this motion is significant and warrants the full attention of all the members of this assembly.

Peter Conroy from London calls. He congratulates the opposition and opposes Bill 68. He sent in a little poem, a ditty, about the member for Guelph, the parliamentary assistant, which I will share with the parliamentary assistant later. I am confident he might tell it to his wife, but certainly not to his kids.

Madeleine Rota calls, once again from North Bay, another North Bay person. Madeleine Rota from McIntyre calls to say that she wants this motion defeated. Why? So that we can have

a thorough discussion of Bill 68, so that we can persuade some 30, perhaps as many as 35, Liberal backbenchers to vote against Bill 68. That way, those Liberal backbenchers will be able to hold their ridings in the next general election, and Bill 68 will be defeated.

You see, Mr Speaker, the message that has to be delivered is that it is not merely enough for the Liberal backbenchers to stay away when we vote on this motion and when we vote on Bill 68. What is important and what people like Madeleine Rota from North Bay want me to tell you, Mr Speaker, is that those Liberal backbenchers who oppose Bill 68 should not just disappear when the vote is being taken but stay and vote against it. All there have to be are 30 or 35 of these Liberals to vote against Bill 68 and the bill is history. That is all we need.

1620

All we need are enough Liberal backbenchers to show courage and a sense of commitment to their constituents and Bill 68 will be defeated.

I made some notes that I want to refer to. I have a whole mass of other phone calls that we received late yesterday after we were finished and early this morning. When I walked into my office at around quarter to nine this morning, poor Sharon was in there and the little pushbuttons were already lit up and just glowing, the bells just ringing. We are, as I told members before, proud to be able to talk to those people here in the province of Ontario.

Let me give members another illustration of why we want to persuade enough Liberals to vote against this time allocation motion. Really, if I thought it was futile, I would have stopped arguing it a long time ago. If I thought there would be no way to persuade at least some of the Liberals sitting here in Queen's Park to vote against the time allocation motion, I would have sat down last week or the week before, or heck, even the week before that.

But I know that there are some Liberals sitting here who are scared about their futures come the next general election. I know that there are Liberals who know that their riding associations have condemned Bill 68, just like the Sudbury Liberal riding association condemned Bill 68 and instructed its member, the representative of that riding, to vote against it; just like the Sudbury East Liberal riding association condemned Bill 68 and has called upon all Liberals sitting to vote against it.

Let me tell you why this time allocation is bad, Mr Speaker. I understand that sometimes you might be concerned about the fact that I am referring to case study after case study. Yet the remarkable thing about the human beast is that each of us is very different and no two people could ever share exactly the same experience. So when we talk about the tragedies that have afflicted people here in the province of Ontario by virtue of a government that does not give a damn and by virtue of an insurance industry that is interested only in making bigger and bigger profits, I give those case studies and those illustrations so that members here can understand how important it is to debate Bill 68.

Here is another pile of telephone messages that were phoned into my office from about 4 o'clock through to 4:20. Gord McEwan from Sarnia called in at 4 pm this afternoon to say he is opposed to Bill 68. John Gore from Cobalt, Ontario, phoned in at 4:05 pm today. John Gore phoned me at 965-7714. Mr Gore from Cobalt says that he appreciates the NDP's efforts on people's behalf. He is dismayed that the provincial Legislature seems to have been taken over by the auto insurance industry.

If this were the only telephone message that I had been able to refer to, that in itself should have been persuasive enough to convince the House leader to withdraw this motion. Does he see what the perception is out there? Does he see why it is important to argue this motion from the point of view of people who are observing it? The perception out there is that there is a link between the way the Tories are trying to impose the GST on us up in Ottawa and the way the Liberals are trying to impose Bill 68 on us here at Queen's Park.

There is also an understanding, an observation, a perception, and members know that perception is oftentimes as significant as reality. There is a perception out there across the province, articulated by John Gore from Cobalt, that the provincial Legislature seems to have been taken over by the auto insurance industry. Mr Gore from Cobalt has that perception of what is going on, and he is not unique, he is not alone.

The Liberals would be wise to listen to people like John Gore, who takes the effort to phone in from Cobalt to try to tell them what the public perception is of this particular assembly, and that is that it has been taken over, it has been seized, it is under siege by the auto insurance industry.

It is sad that people in the community, people across the province, regard their Legislature as having been taken over by the auto insurance industry, but I tell you, Mr Speaker, people like John Gore from Cobalt say so, and he is not unique, he is not alone.

Bob Whiteford calls from Brampton. He has voted Liberal all of his life, but he is disgusted with Bill 68, and, more important, with not allowing full time for debate. I have a feeling Bob Whiteford will not be voting Liberal any more, and that is from Brampton.

Ray Lamontagne—and Ray is an old friend of mine—phones in from Welland and he is in full support of the opposition. He wants Bill 68 abandoned, he wants it dropped, he wants it dumped, he wants it defeated and he also wants this time allocation motion withdrawn. There are more messages here. Ray Lamontagne from Welland feels that way.

I wish and I hope that these people are calling the Premier of Ontario at 416-965-1941 right here at Queen's Park. Those people who live outside of Toronto should be calling collect because he is their Premier too. You would not know it by virtue of the fact that he does not want to talk to them; you would not know it by virtue of the fact that if you are the president of an insurance company, you get put right through to the Premier of Ontario.

This time allocation motion has caused us so much concern. People from every community in every part of this province regard time allocation in the instance of Bill 68 to be worthy of nothing more than a withdrawal or a condemning vote by this assembly. We have to debate time allocation. Do you know why, Mr Speaker? Because if we do not win in our fight against time allocation, we do not have a snowball's chance in Hades of winning in our fight against Bill 68.

That is why Doug Anderson from Thunder Bay—Thunder Bay once again—phones in and says: "Bill 68 stinks. I always voted Liberal, but never again."

Ralph MacDougall from Brampton opposes Bill 68 and he is particularly concerned about the promise made by the Minister of Financial Institutions. Remember what the promise was, Mr Speaker? The promise by the Minister of Financial Institutions was that after Bill 68 is passed drivers in Ontario are going to face premium increases of as much as 50 per cent.

Then we learned through the press a week and a half ago that a third of a million drivers in Ontario are going to face

premium increases of up to 80 per cent. A third of a million drivers after Bill 68 is passed are going to face premium increases of up to 80 per cent, and the balance of the drivers in Ontario, according to the Minister of Financial Institutions, are going to face premium increases of as high as 50 per cent. That is one promise I am sure the minister is going to keep.

Ralph MacDougall from Brampton is scared out of his wits by that particular promise. He does not like Bill 68, he does not like the time allocation motion, and he is not very pleased with how his affairs are being conducted by his government, except that the reality is that it is the insurance companies' government. This really is not Ralph MacDougall's government or Doug Anderson's government or Ray Lamontagne's government or Bob Whiteford's government. It is the insurance companies' government, is it not? This really is not Ralph MacDougall's government or Doug Anderson's government, or Ray Lamontagne's government's government or Bob Whiteford's government; it is the insurance companies' government is it not?

1630

Allen Hopkins from Sudbury East. You see, Mr Hopkins says that the Liberals are cowards for not holding a debate. You know what, Mr Speaker? The Liberals have fled from a debate over Bill 68; that is what a time allocation motion is all about. A time allocation motion is all about not wanting to debate the issue or rather fleeing from debate and imposing closure, especially in this context.

Let's take a look at why flight from debate can be used to describe this particular time allocation motion. Let's take a look at why, because the time allocation motion permits but two scant afternoons for committee of the whole consideration: two short afternoons, about two and one half, maybe two and three quarter, hours each. There is not even enough time to read all of the amendments that the Liberals are going to propose. Two scant afternoons are not enough. The Liberals know that and what that amounts to is a Liberal refusal to debate Bill 68.

Hon Mr Ward: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: Which standing order?

Hon Mr Ward: It is under standing order 16(c), I think, but I will indicate to the member that he can tell me how many afternoons he wants for committee of the whole and—

The Deputy Speaker: That is not a point of order.

Mr Kormos: See, the Liberals are backtracking now; they are backpedalling like mad.

Chris Reece from Cambridge phones up and he says: "I do not like Bill 68. It stinks." Chris Reece is probably right and you see, we are prepared to listen to people like Chris Reece from Cambridge, we are prepared to listen to people like Susan Hagar from Matheson, Ontario, who says that she is totally against Bill 68.

People like Michelle Najaro from Etobicoke who is opposed to Bill 68 because it takes away people's rights and people should have a right to use the courts to seek redress when they are victims. Michelle Najaro from Etobicoke knows that. To the Liberal members here, are they prepared to listen to her? They hear her, but are they prepared to listen? No, because the stranglehold that the auto insurance industry has on this government is simply too tight and too firm.

Richard and Barbara Pinelli from Downsview say they voted Liberal in the last election. We know that there are people out there who voted Liberal in the last election. They could not

have ended up with the majority that they have unless there were people out there who voted Liberal. Richard and Barbara Pinelli from Downsview say: "No more. Not next time," because of this time allocation motion and because of Bill 68.

George Anselmo calls from St Catharines. Mr Anselmo, like so many others across the province, are watching what is happening here at Queen's Park. They are watching with dismay and they are calling in to say that they support the opposition 100 per cent. Let me tell you why Bill 68 warrants full debate and why this time allocation motion has to be voted down.

William Boehm—although it is written Boehm it is pronounced B-e-e-m—was an insurance broker and indeed still is. He is the vice-president of W. R. Boehm and Son in Grimsby, Ontario. I think anybody who wanted to get a hold of a broker whom they could trust would be more than satisfied with William Boehm, because Mr Boehm was involved as a victim. He was hit from behind at 70 kilometres per hour. He had brain surgery in October 1987 and the operation was successful.

This was not a modest or trivial injury and Mr Boehm—after all, he has been an insurance broker for some chunk of time; he is the vice-president of W. R. Boehm and Son in Grimsby—knows what he is talking about. He knows the insurance industry in a way that most people never have the, as it is, fortune or misfortune of ever learning about it.

But Mr Boehm also knows, having been an innocent injured victim back in October 1987—hit from behind, no blame whatsoever could be attached to him—that if Bill 68 passes and if Bill 68 had been in effect when he became an innocent injured victim, he would not receive any compensation for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life. He had to undergo brain surgery as a result of his injuries, but his injuries were not sufficient to pass the threshold. It was not a continuous impairment.

He goes on in his message in his memo to say that, when he spoke with the Attorney General when he met him a month ago at an address here in Toronto, the Attorney General avoided the issue. The Attorney General did not want to discuss Bill 68 with Mr Boehm, an insurance broker who himself is a victim, an innocent injured victim of a motor vehicle accident. Mr Boehm says that, in his view, the Attorney General is hiding his head in the sand and that if he cannot stand the heat in his own kitchen, he should get out of politics.

It is because of people like Mr Boehm, people who are indeed innocent injured victims, people who, if Bill 68 becomes law, will be forbidden from receiving any compensation for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life.

Mrs Putnam from Welland called up and asked if any of the Liberals here want to pay her son's insurance of \$2,500 a year, explaining that he had to sell his car because of the rates, and she knows that if Bill 68 passes people like her son are liable to face as much as 50 per cent premium increases, or if they are one of the unlucky third of a million people in the province of Ontario, will face even higher premium increases of up to 80 per cent.

David Klein of Toronto phoned us this afternoon, but he phoned to explain that he supports what we are doing here at Queen's Park, we in the opposition. He supports our position on auto insurance and our position on this time allocation motion, which is a bad law, and the time allocation motion simply has to be defeated.

Mr Speaker, suppose that, notwithstanding how massive the opposition is to this time allocation motion and Bill 68 right

now, the real impact of it is going to hit a year, two years, perhaps even longer, down the road, and that is if the Liberals have their way. Bear with me for a moment, Mr Speaker, because I want to narrate a scenario to you, one which will, I am confident, draw you closer to the inevitable conclusion that this time allocation motion has to be defeated; that we need full debate over Bill 68.

Let's look at a date some time on down the road. Let's look at a date, maybe, 19 April 1992, two years hence. Notwithstanding the protestations of thousands and tens and hundreds of thousands of people across Ontario, this government persists in ramming Bill 68 through.

1640

The government has kept its promise. Its premium increases in the first year were as much as 50 per cent and, for almost a third of a million drivers in Ontario, as high as 80 per cent. On top of that, of course, drivers across Ontario had to pay the goods and services tax that those Tory cousins of the Liberals here at Queen's Park, the feds, imposed.

So, premiums are higher than they have ever been, even in people's worst fears. By 19 April 1992, premiums are higher than they have ever been. And this government, these Liberals at Queen's Park, refuse to call an election over Bill 68, notwithstanding the demands, the insistence, of the opposition. They refuse to listen to those thousands and tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of people across Ontario who said no to Bill 68.

Let's talk about a scenario in April 1992 and let me introduce you to an average Ontario family. We will call them the Innocent family. Father Bill works for Ford Motors as a maintenance man down there in Oakville. He earns around \$50,000 a year and he works hard for it. He has got a wage continuation plan hammered out by his union that pays him \$600 a week if he is sick or injured. Bill Innocent's wife, Mary Innocent, is a high school teacher and she earns \$40,000 a year. Again, these are not unreasonable illustrations of what real people in this province are all about. Mary Innocent is in good health. She has not missed any time from work and, as a result of that, she has accumulated a total of one year's worth of credits in her sick bank. The son, Jack, is a medical student. He is one month away from graduation, and let me say that Jack Innocent worked hard to achieve that goal in school. His sister Chris is a mere 15 years. She is an exceptional tennis player and she, of course, is a good student attending high school.

Let's talk about the Innocent family driving home from church one Sunday morning in Bill Innocent's five-year-old car. Bill Innocent is driving his car along a through highway with his wife Mary beside him and the two kids in the back. All of them are wearing their seatbelts and, without warning, they are struck by a 10-year-old car driven by a Noel Fault. He is a service station attendant earning \$650 a week. Noel Fault earlier that morning had had a falling out with his girl friend and that had caused Noel, Mr Fault if you will, to get into the beer. He drowned his sorrows with some seven or eight beers, just happened to miss a stop sign and ran into the car that the Innocent family was in on their way home from church on that Sunday morning in April 1992.

The Innocents' car is struck on the right rear corner exactly where young Chris, the 15-year-old high school student, good tennis player, is. The right rear quadrant of the car is what is hit by Noel Fault in his 10-year-old car as he goes through a stop sign drunk up on seven or eight beers. The car is a total loss but, within a matter of days, Bill Innocent's insurers, the Peter

and Son Insurance Co, settles his collision loss at the depreciated market value.

Once again, insurance companies, even the Peter and Son Insurance Co, get heavy-handed when it comes to total losses and, although the car was worth much more when it came to replacement, they can grind away and they settled it as a total loss for its depreciated value of \$3,000. We are talking about Bill Innocent's car because his wife, Mary, has her own car, which is also insured with Peter and Son Insurance Co at a premium just slightly less than what was being paid by her husband, Bill.

Let me tell members about Chris Innocent, a 15-year-old girl, high school student, great tennis player. She ends up in the hospital with both large bones in her lower legs broken, smashed. She also suffers a separated right shoulder. Luckily, fortunately, she did not require surgery. This 15-year-old girl, sitting in the right rear of the car—exactly where Noel Fault struck it, drunk up, going through the stop sign—wearing a seatbelt like her brother and her parents, on her way home from church and struck by a drunk driver going through a stop sign. This beautiful 15-year-old girl, great tennis player, high school student, ends up in the hospital with two broken legs and a separated right shoulder. She is put under a general anaesthetic and her broken bones are realigned, and she is placed in two plaster casts. During that same procedure at the same point in time, her shoulder is manipulated, twisted back into position and was taped up.

It takes a long time for her bones to heal and she has to stay in hospital for some four months while that healing process was initiated. I tell members that the hospital and doctors' accounts are all paid for by OHIP, of course, because, as a result of the persistence of the New Democrats, OHIP is available to every resident of the province of Ontario regardless, and to Chris Innocent among those people.

After she is discharged from that four-month stay in the hospital—that is how long it takes for those two broken legs to heal—she still goes to a convalescent home for another three months or so. Five months after the accident, the last of her casts is removed. She uses crutches and then she has to use canes, and finally, a full year after that accident in April 1992, she is able to return to school.

The doctors do a marvellous job, and she is left with only some occasional aching in her legs and just a little weakness and stiffness in her right arm, but basically the bone was healed and the dislocated shoulder was restored. But she has some aching in her legs and some soreness and weakness in her right arm and her right shoulder where that dislocation took place.

She tried playing tennis, and members should not forget that she was a great tennis player and it was a pastime that she pursued with vigour and with passion, but really, there was little strength left in her serve and her game just was not what it was before the accident. Before the accident, people were calling her an up-and-coming Carling Bassett, but it was clear to her even a few months later that when she played her tennis game, a game that she loved, she was just simply not as quick afoot as she used to be. She finally resigned herself to being an average club player.

Incidentally, members should know that arrangements had been made for this young lady, this young 15-year-old Chris Innocent, to attend a tennis camp in Florida during the summer of 1992. The accident was in April. Just two or three months later she was supposed to have gone to this tennis camp down in Florida. Indeed, the payment was made in advance and the club, in accordance with its policy, could not make a refund,

notwithstanding that this young lady was unable to attend; she was in the hospital with two broken legs.

Her brother, Jack Innocent, suffers a concussion in this scenario. What happened was that his head struck the window beside him. Members should not forget that he is the young man who is—what?—about a month away from graduating from medical school. Here is a young man who worked hard academically to achieve success in his academic career. He was in the hospital for only a couple of days. He got a concussion. He banged his head against the window as a result of a drunk driver, Noel Fault, who has seven or eight beers and goes through a stop sign.

1650

The drunk driver strikes the innocent car in the right rear and causes Jack, the boy, to bang his head against the window beside him. There is a concussion and a couple of days in the hospital, but he is left with severe headaches and dizziness. His memory is impaired and his concentration is poor. He attempted to write his final examinations for medical school, but he failed. Here is a young man who had achieved good grades all of his academic career, who all of a sudden now has failed his final examinations for medical school. Thanks to a doctor's letter, he was permitted to repeat his final year at medical school, and that second time around, after another year invested, another year of lost opportunity, he did indeed graduate successfully.

In the summer after the accident, he had forced himself to work at a carwash by day and at a restaurant by night in order to earn the tuition for the year following the accident. His headaches and dizziness finally disappeared at about the same time he was rewriting his final examination a year and some months later. What happened was that effectively his career as a doctor had been delayed one year. That is what happened to Jack Innocent, the brother.

Mary Innocent—remember the school teacher?—suffered severe neck injuries as well as headaches and dizziness. She became depressed because of those injuries and because of the injuries affecting her children and her husband. What happened is that a supply teacher had to complete Mary Innocent's year at school and Mary Innocent missed her next school year. She had many, many trips to a doctor and a physiotherapist. Once again the physiotherapy and the doctor's attendances were all paid for by OHIP.

I just got a message from Randy Richards in Sault Ste Marie. He called to say that he is tired of the government's not listening and he says no to Bill 68.

Joan Brown of Etobicoke called and said she is worried about sick leave. We are going to talk about that in just a minute when we see what happens to Mary Innocent in our scenario. These people, just as we do, insist that a full debate on Bill 68 is required and that a time allocation motion simply gives too short a shrift to the whole issue. The issue is not a simple one; it is complex one and it is a broad one. Joan Brown from Etobicoke knows that. She is worried about accumulative sick leave and asks, "Will it get wiped out when we have accidents before the insurance companies pay any benefits with Bill 68?" Ms Brown, we are going to talk exactly about that in an effort to illustrate why we need full debate on Bill 68 when we talk about what happens in this 1992 scenario regarding Mary Innocent, an innocent injured victim.

Jim Savage from Carlton Street phoned in from Thorold. He opposes Bill 68. Jim Savage opposes Bill 68 down in Thorold, and he supports the opposition.

John Conte from Amherstburg phones up and says he supports the opposition completely in opposing Bill 68. It is people like Mr Conte and Mr Savage who make this debate as important as it is.

John Hill from London, Ontario, phoned this afternoon. He supports the opposition's position on Bill 68. Again, that is exactly why I am going through this illustration, this 1992 scenario, because John Hill wants to know about what happens to a university student who is in an accident and loses a year of university. John Hill from London would have us ask that question of the Minister of Financial Institutions, if the Minister of Financial Institutions and if the Premier of Ontario were to permit a debate about Bill 68.

So you see, Mr Speaker, this is of significance and importance to people across Ontario.

Mike Beam from London, Ontario phones in and talks about his total disagreement with Bill 68, about losing rights. That is what Bill 68 does: It strips rights from drivers, from taxpayers, from innocent injured victims. He asks what happens to a person on disability if hit by an impaired driver and if he had to go to a hospital, and would he lose benefits because he was no longer at home. He also knows that you cannot use the courts in 95 per cent of the circumstances. You will not be able to use the courts. You will not be permitted to use the courts if the Liberal House leader persists in this time allocation motion so that we cannot debate Bill 68, because the whole reason we want to debate Bill 68 is that we know it is bad law and we want to see it dumped. We want to see it defeated. We want to see it abandoned.

People across Ontario are phoning this afternoon, just like they did yesterday afternoon, and they are saying no way to no-fault, no way to closure, no way to time allocation by the arrogant Liberals here at Queen's Park. People across Ontario are insistent that the Bill 68 debate be permitted to proceed.

We have, as I say, Mike Beam calling in, and John Hill, both from London, John Conte from Amherstburg, Jim Savage from Thorold, and Joan Brown from Etobicoke. They are calling in with concerns exactly like those concerns that I am going to illustrate in this scenario. Do not forget, we are talking 1992. We are talking about what happens if we do not get a chance to debate Bill 68 so that we can encourage those—what?—30 to 35 Liberal backbenchers to vote against Bill 68.

That is why we want and need what we insist on, the opportunity to debate Bill 68, because it has become so important that we persuade a mere 30 to 35 Liberal backbenchers that the right thing to do is not what the insurance companies want them to do, but what the people in their ridings want them to do. The reward will be re-election for those same Liberals who would vote against Bill 68.

A thorough debate of Bill 68 is imperative if we are going to achieve that goal. It is imperative that just as there surely are 30 to 35 Liberal backbenchers to vote against Bill 68, there are as many Liberal backbenchers who are prepared, once they have heard all of the arguments, to vote against this time allocation motion. One of the important things is to illustrate that the time contained in the time allocation motion is insufficient, is inadequate for a careful consideration of Bill 68.

Let's talk about, once again for the sake of argument, an imaginary family but for the sake of discussion a very realistic family. We have given them names. They were called the Innocent family, because that is what they are. We had talked about the injuries the Innocents have received. We had talked about young, 15-year-old Chris, with broken legs and a dislocated shoulder, unable to play tennis as she once had.

We talked about her older brother, Jack Innocent, the medical student, who suffered the concussion, dizziness and headaches, who was unable to pass his examination at medical school that year and will have to repeat the year, and Mary Innocent, with the severe neck injuries, the headaches and the dizziness, who had to have her school year completed by a supply teacher and who became depressed as a result of her injuries and the injuries of her children. Do not forget that we are talking about a point in time and a scenario that will occur if we are not permitted to debate Bill 68 so as to fight for its defeat.

1700

Once again, just as the medical bills and the hospital bills for Jack Innocent and his younger sister, Chris Innocent, were paid for by OHIP, Mary Innocent's are paid for by OHIP too. She went to a lot of doctors; a lot of doctors' visits, a lot of physiotherapy. She also spent a lot of time in bed because of pain and the effect of the drugs she was required to take, the painkillers and the muscle relaxants. The drugs were paid for by a drug plan that her husband had as a result of working at the Ford plant in Oakville.

A year after the accident she finally got back to her career, to teaching. Her neck was still a little stiff and tender, but the doctors told her, "We'll give it another couple of years and you will be fully recovered." There is just no doubt in their minds about that, notwithstanding that she had been off for a year, that she had been depressed, that she had been physiotherapied, that she had been painkilled, and yet her neck was still sensitive and sore. In another couple of years, the doctors told her, she would be cured and healed completely.

She continued to receive her pay, but in the process she used up all the sick days she had accumulated in her previous year as a teacher. In September 1993 she contracted a virus and was forced to be off work another three months. Since she had used up all her available sick leave days, she now received no sick pay for those three months. So here it is. You have a lady who is a perfectly innocent victim, who because of Bill 68 has to use up all her sick days. Notwithstanding that she is injured by a drunk driver, she has to use up all her own sick days and when she becomes sick as a result of a virus some time later, there are no more sick days in the sick bank to call on. She does not get paid.

The virus, according to the doctor, was something that just happened as viruses do and could not in any way be linked to her accident or even, according to the doctor, although she was suspicious about this, to her rundown condition when she forced herself to return to work. Ms Innocent continues to be mildly depressed and the doctors say that, unfortunately, is probably going to be permanent, that although her physical injuries will heal, given another two or three years, her mild depression is sadly going to be permanent as a result of the accident, as a result of those injuries.

The fourth person in that car, the driver, Bill Innocent, suffered a fractured vertebra in his lower back as a result of being struck by Noel Fault, the drunk driver, the one who had the fight with his girlfriend, who drowned his sorrows in seven or eight beers and went through the stop sign, ramming the Innocents' car as they were coming back from church.

Bill Innocent, Ford factory worker for a long time, making a good income, \$50,000 a year, suffers a fractured vertebra in his lower back and the strain of some muscles in his neck and in the lower back. He spent two weeks in the hospital and when he was discharged he continued to complain of constant low-back

pain, which prevented him from lifting and bending. His doctor advised him that as a result of the heavy nature of his work at the Ford plant, he should stay off work for at least six months. It took a whole lot—

Mr Daigeler: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Under standing order 23(m) I would like to ask whether the arrogant and self-appointed monopolizing of the business of the House for the last two weeks by one member of the House offends the practices and precedents of this House or of any other democratically elected parliamentary institution.

The Speaker: Any other members on that point? The member has drawn standing order 23(m) to my attention. I have listened to the speaker and I am certain that the speaker will continue on the subject.

Mr Kormos: What we are talking about here is a scenario that will unfold if we do not vote against time allocation and if we similarly, as a result of that, do not have full debate about Bill 68. Because if we do not have full debate on Bill 68, if we are not permitted to debate it fully as it deserves, I fear that there are enough Liberals here that it will pass. It will become law.

Why we need full debate is so that we in the opposition have enough opportunity to persuade, through argument, 30 to 35 Liberal backbenchers who want to keep their ridings in the next election to vote against Bill 68. A part of that argument will be an illustration of what Bill 68 entails. We cannot divorce Bill 68 from the time allocation motion.

If Bill 68 were a modest or trivial bit of law that had marginal impact on very few people, then it would be hard for me to argue against time allocation, but to the contrary, it is a complex and weighty matter that requires full consideration. It is exactly this scenario that I am talking about. We are talking about a province wherein there has been time closure, wherein the Liberals have used their arrogant majority to have their way and the way of the auto insurance industry, because we are talking about a time in April 1992 when a family can become innocent injured victims. We are talking about what happens to them under Bill 68.

I should tell you, Mr Speaker, that Burt Dandy from Manitoulin Island, who is the past president of the Scarborough West Provincial Liberal Association, just phoned my office from Manitoulin to say no way to Bill 68.

What happened to Bill Innocent? We heard about the broken vertebra in his lower back. We heard about the prohibition by his doctor from returning to work because of the heavy lifting and the bending required at the Ford plant where Bill Innocent works. We heard—we will now—about the painkillers that he is subjected to, the painkillers that he has to take and the time that it is going to take for the vertebra to heal. We are then talking about a succession of physiotherapy, more pain pills and more muscle relaxants.

We are talking about a scenario wherein the doctor was overly optimistic, where six months was not enough for recovery to take place. Rather, the doctor—he cannot be faulted for his optimism—underestimated recovery time by a full 100 per cent, where indeed it was a year before Bill Innocent could return to work after the accident.

He went back to work and continues to suffer pain, but he persevered at his job. His doctor assured him, just as the doctors assured his wife, Mary Innocent, that eventually he would be fully recovered.

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What happened is that the ongoing discomfort, which the doctor assured him would eventually disappear, made his work much more difficult than it had been before the accident. Indeed, it made it impossible for Bill Innocent, in 1993 now, to work any overtime. In the past, he had worked a whole lot of overtime. Part of the family's prosperity was due to his eagerness to work extra hours. In the year prior to the accident, he had made some \$5,000 in overtime. In the year in which he returned to work, he made not a penny in overtime because the pain, the discomfort, his own disability prevented him from taking on that overtime work. His own wage continuation plan—indeed, the employer provided one—paid him some \$600 a week before he was able to return to work.

Mr Speaker, I will tell you why this scenario is important to consider. It is because if we do not have a full debate about Bill 68, if we are not given an opportunity during committee of the whole House to confront the Minister of Financial Institutions with these various facets of Bill 68, there will not have been an adequate consideration of the effect of Bill 68 on drivers, on taxpayers and on innocent injured victims, like the Innocent family is here in this illustration.

Noel Fault is the fellow who went through a stop sign. He made \$650 a week working at a gas bar. Noel Fault suffered some injuries too. He had injuries to his head, his neck and his back, and his injuries were such that he could not return to work.

It has been contended by a whole lot of people that Bill 68, in more than the rare circumstance, will treat the drunk driver better than it will treat his victim. It has been proposed by more than a few that Bill 68 can treat a drunk driver better than it can treat that drunk driver's victim. John Bates from People to Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere knows that and he tried to tell the government that.

Mr Philip: Albert Roy said that, did he not?

Mr Kormos: Albert Roy, an ex-Liberal member, who appeared in front of the standing committee on general government in Ottawa, tried to tell the Liberals that too.

I tell you, Mr Speaker, that is the very sort of thing that has to be dealt with during the course of committee of the whole House. That is why two mere short afternoons are thoroughly inadequate for a proper discussion of Bill 68 and what it means for drivers, taxpayers and victims. If you think that it is fanciful to suggest that drunk drivers can be treated better than victims under Bill 68, under this Liberal auto insurance scheme, the one the auto insurance industry wants, and you think it does not warrant consideration and discussion during a careful, lengthy, appropriate, timed debate, listen to this, please.

We are talking about Noel Fault, who had seven or eight beers after a fight with his girlfriend that early Sunday morning, who hopped into his car, went through a stop sign and rammed the Innocent vehicle in the side, injuring all four occupants of that vehicle. Under the terms of the Liberals' Bill 68, Noel Fault, as an at-fault driver, was entitled to collect 80 per cent of his wages up to a maximum of \$600 from his own insurer for that period of time that he was disabled. In the case of Noel Fault, earning \$650 a week at his job, unable to work, injured as a drunk driver in that accident, his insurer is obligated to pay him \$520 a week while he is disabled.

This is the proverbial caveat, because the Liberals would tend to crow about the fact that if he were convicted of impaired driving, his insurer had the right to ask for the money back. Let me develop this, and the members will find it as

remarkable as tens and hundreds of thousands of people across Ontario do right now. Because you know, Mr Speaker, that because of the backlog in the provincial court system it is going to turn out that Noel Fault will not be brought to trial for his impaired driving until some two years after the accident. He will be convicted, but by that time his insurer will have paid him \$53,040 at the rate of \$520 a week.

The Liberals would say, "Ah, but the insurance company can look for its money back." But by the time two years has passed and the insurance company has paid him \$53,040, it will look at the practicality of the matter and it will decide that it undoubtedly will be a waste of time and money to sue him since Noel Fault's only asset was the job to which he had returned. The insurer will simply close its file. That is not speculative. That is exactly what is going to happen.

Mr Ballinger: What planet are you on?

Mr Furlong: It's absolute nonsense.

Mr Kormos: You hear the squeaking from the Liberal ranks now and you realize that this calls out for debate. What a contentious issue, and it should be a matter of great concern to everybody in this assembly. The fact, the proposition, that Bill 68 could treat a drunk driver better than his victim calls out for thorough debate. That is why this time allocation motion has to be defeated.

Cliff Pottruff from Burlington said in his phone call to me he voted Liberal for 20 years, but if this bill goes through this is the last time he will have voted Liberal. Cliff Pottruff from Burlington says if the Premier is so sure about this bill, why will he not let the public have a vote on it? Why will he not go to the polls with it? Why will he not debate it in the Legislature? Why does he want to gag the opposition? Why does he want to muzzle the opposition?

Let me get back to the Innocents. We are talking about 1993 now. The Innocent family was referred by a family friend to a lawyer, a former cabinet minister now in private practice by the name of Great Scott. They saw that lawyer in December 1993. He listened to them as they related their injuries and losses and he concluded that none of them had suffered a permanent, serious impairment of an important bodily function caused by continuing injury which is physical in nature, which is, of course, the threshold. This imaginary lawyer in this scenario, one Great Scott, concluded that none of the four Innocents met the threshold. Notwithstanding the severity of the injuries, not one of those four Innocents could be compensated for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life as a result of Bill 68.

Additionally, they were advised by that same lawyer that there was no economic loss which, under the provisions of Bill 68, entitled any of them to claim against either Noel Fault, the at-fault party or their own insurer.

1720

That same lawyer in 1993 had to tell them that as a result of Bill 68 having been passed by the Liberals, they could not go to the courts to enforce any remedies against the at-fault party. What this meant was that Chris, the 15-year-old daughter, the tennis player, the high school student, would not be compensated for her confinement to the hospital, for her pain and suffering, for her loss of enjoyment of life. She would not be compensated for the loss of a school year and for the destruction of a promising professional tennis career. She could not even sue for the tennis camp fees. Remember, in the summer of 1992, the summer tennis camp down in Florida that she had paid the fees for, that were not refundable, but that she was

prevented from going to because she was an innocent victim in a motor vehicle accident? Bill 68 prohibited her, it barred her, it forbade her, from even collecting the fees that she had paid out of pocket for the summer tennis camp in Florida.

Jack, the medical student, was entitled to nothing, not a penny, not a nickel, not a dime, for his pain and suffering and for the loss of one year's income as a doctor. Let's remember, as a result of his injuries he had to repeat his final year of medical school, yet he was entitled to nothing, not a penny, because of Bill 68 having been passed in 1990.

Now Mr and Mrs Innocent Sr, the parents, could not sue Noel Fault. They were forbidden. They were forbidden by Bill 68 from suing Noel Fault for their pain and suffering and for Mrs Innocent's, Mary Innocent's, depression. Mr Innocent received no credit for having a wage continuation plan at work and, to boot, he was prohibited, he was barred, he was forbidden from suing for his wage loss over and above what he received from work because that was not an allowable claim under Bill 68. His inability to work overtime, perhaps for the rest of his life, is similarly not something for which he can recover compensation. He is an innocent victim, an innocent injured victim. He is not at fault; he did not do anything wrong.

Mrs Innocent, Mary Innocent, a high school teacher, could not sue for the loss of one year's accumulated sick days, nor could she sue for the three months that she lost when the accident caused her to use up her sick days. None of those four Innocents could sue Noel Fault nor even their own insurer for the loss of companionship that each had suffered because of the hospitalization and the effect on the quality of their lives for the months following the accident.

Noel Fault would not be liable to pay anything to any member of the Innocent family. This is a drunk driver who went through a stop sign, smashed into their car and smashed their bodies. But Noel Fault, as a result of Bill 68, would be cleared of any liability, would be protected from any liability for his damage, his injuries inflicted on members of the Innocent family. Mr and Mrs Innocent, with their two insurance policies with the Peter and Son Insurance Co—and other than the collision loss, not one penny was payable to any member of the Innocent family under either policy. You are talking about Bill 68 as a piece of legislation that will compensate people for smashed vehicles but will not compensate them for smashed and torn bodies.

Now up to December 1993, as you know, Mr Speaker, Noel Fault had received many thousands of dollars from his own insurer as wage replacement because he had not yet been convicted of drunk or impaired driving. The Innocents ask how such an unjust result happened in an enlightened society like Ontario.

He went back to work and continues to suffer pain, but he persevered at his job. His doctor assured him, just as the doctors assured his wife, Mary Innocent, that eventually he would be fully recovered.

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What happened is that the ongoing discomfort, which the doctor assured him would eventually disappear, made his work much more difficult than it had been before the accident. Indeed, it made it impossible for Bill Innocent, in 1993 now, to work any overtime. In the past, he had worked a whole lot of overtime. Part of the family's prosperity was due to his eagerness to work extra hours. In the year prior to the accident, he had made some \$5,000 in overtime. In the year in which he returned to work, he made not a penny in overtime because the

pain, the discomfort, his own disability prevented him from taking on that overtime work. His own wage continuation plan—indeed, the employer provided one—paid him some \$600 a week before he was able to return to work.

Mr Speaker, I will tell you why this scenario is important to consider. It is because if we do not have a full debate about Bill 68, if we are not given an opportunity during committee of the whole House to confront the Minister of Financial Institutions with these various facets of Bill 68, there will not have been an adequate consideration of the effect of Bill 68 on drivers, on taxpayers and on innocent injured victims, like the Innocent family is here in this illustration.

Noel Fault is the fellow who went through a stop sign. He made \$650 a week working at a gas bar. Noel Fault suffered some injuries too. He had injuries to his head, his neck and his back, and his injuries were such that he could not return to work.

It has been contended by a whole lot of people that Bill 68, in more than the rare circumstance, will treat the drunk driver better than it will treat his victim. It has been proposed by more than a few that Bill 68 can treat a drunk driver better than it can treat that drunk driver's victim. John Bates from People to Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere knows that and he tried to tell the government that.

Mr Philip: Albert Roy said that, did he not?

Mr Kormos: Albert Roy, an ex-Liberal member, who appeared in front of the standing committee on general government in Ottawa, tried to tell the Liberals that too.

I tell you, Mr Speaker, that is the very sort of thing that has to be dealt with during the course of committee of the whole House. That is why two mere short afternoons are thoroughly inadequate for a proper discussion of Bill 68 and what it means for drivers, taxpayers and victims. If you think that it is fanciful to suggest that drunk drivers can be treated better than victims under Bill 68, under this Liberal auto insurance scheme, the one the auto insurance industry wants, and you think it does not warrant consideration and discussion during a careful, lengthy, appropriate, timed debate, listen to this, please.

We are talking about Noel Fault, who had seven or eight beers after a fight with his girlfriend that early Sunday morning, who hopped into his car, went through a stop sign and rammed the Innocent vehicle in the side, injuring all four occupants of that vehicle. Under the terms of the Liberals' Bill 68, Noel Fault, as an at-fault driver, was entitled to collect 80 per cent of his wages up to a maximum of \$600 from his own insurer for that period of time that he was disabled. In the case of Noel Fault, earning \$650 a week at his job, unable to work, injured as a drunk driver in that accident, his insurer is obligated to pay him \$520 a week while he is disabled.

This is the proverbial caveat, because the Liberals would tend to crow about the fact that if he were convicted of impaired driving, his insurer had the right to ask for the money back. Let me develop this, and the members will find it as remarkable as tens and hundreds of thousands of people across Ontario do right now. Because you know, Mr Speaker, that because of the backlog in the provincial court system it is going to turn out that Noel Fault will not be brought to trial for his impaired driving until some two years after the accident. He will be convicted, but by that time his insurer will have paid him \$53,040 at the rate of \$520 a week.

The Liberals would say, "Ah, but the insurance company can look for its money back." But by the time two years has passed and the insurance company has paid him \$53,040, it will

look at the practicality of the matter and it will decide that it undoubtedly will be a waste of time and money to sue him since Noel Fault's only asset was the job to which he had returned. The insurer will simply close its file. That is not speculative. That is exactly what is going to happen.

Mr Ballinger: What planet are you on?

Mr Furlong: It's absolute nonsense.

Mr Kormos: You hear the squeaking from the Liberal ranks now and you realize that this calls out for debate. What a contentious issue, and it should be a matter of great concern to everybody in this assembly. The fact, the proposition, that Bill 68 could treat a drunk driver better than his victim calls out for thorough debate. That is why this time allocation motion has to be defeated.

Cliff Pottruff from Burlington said in his phone call to me he voted Liberal for 20 years, but if this bill goes through this is the last time he will have voted Liberal. Cliff Pottruff from Burlington says if the Premier is so sure about this bill, why will he not let the public have a vote on it? Why will he not go to the polls with it? Why will he not debate it in the Legislature? Why does he want to gag the opposition? Why does he want to muzzle the opposition?

Let me get back to the Innocents. We are talking about 1993 now. The Innocent family was referred by a family friend to a lawyer, a former cabinet minister now in private practice by the name of Great Scott. They saw that lawyer in December 1993. He listened to them as they related their injuries and losses and he concluded that none of them had suffered a permanent, serious impairment of an important bodily function caused by continuing injury which is physical in nature, which is, of course, the threshold. This imaginary lawyer in this scenario, one Great Scott, concluded that none of the four Innocents met the threshold. Notwithstanding the severity of the injuries, not one of those four Innocents could be compensated for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life as a result of Bill 68.

Additionally, they were advised by that same lawyer that there was no economic loss which, under the provisions of Bill 68, entitled any of them to claim against either Noel Fault, the at-fault party or their own insurer.

1720

That same lawyer in 1993 had to tell them that as a result of Bill 68 having been passed by the Liberals, they could not go to the courts to enforce any remedies against the at-fault party. What this meant was that Chris, the 15-year-old daughter, the tennis player, the high school student, would not be compensated for her confinement to the hospital, for her pain and suffering, for her loss of enjoyment of life. She would not be compensated for the loss of a school year and for the destruction of a promising professional tennis career. She could not even sue for the tennis camp fees. Remember, in the summer of 1992, the summer tennis camp down in Florida that she had paid the fees for, that were not refundable, but that she was prevented from going to because she was an innocent victim in a motor vehicle accident? Bill 68 prohibited her, it barred her, it forbade her, from even collecting the fees that she had paid out of pocket for the summer tennis camp in Florida.

Jack, the medical student, was entitled to nothing, not a penny, not a nickel, not a dime, for his pain and suffering and for the loss of one year's income as a doctor. Let's remember, as a result of his injuries he had to repeat his final year of medical school, yet he was entitled to nothing, not a penny, because of Bill 68 having been passed in 1990.

Now Mr and Mrs Innocent Sr, the parents, could not sue Noel Fault. They were forbidden. They were forbidden by Bill 68 from suing Noel Fault for their pain and suffering and for Mrs Innocent's, Mary Innocent's, depression. Mr Innocent received no credit for having a wage continuation plan at work and, to boot, he was prohibited, he was barred, he was forbidden from suing for his wage loss over and above what he received from work because that was not an allowable claim under Bill 68. His inability to work overtime, perhaps for the rest of his life, is similarly not something for which he can recover compensation. He is an innocent victim, an innocent injured victim. He is not at fault; he did not do anything wrong.

Mrs Innocent, Mary Innocent, a high school teacher, could not sue for the loss of one year's accumulated sick days, nor could she sue for the three months that she lost when the accident caused her to use up her sick days. None of those four Innocents could sue Noel Fault nor even their own insurer for the loss of companionship that each had suffered because of the hospitalization and the effect on the quality of their lives for the months following the accident.

Noel Fault would not be liable to pay anything to any member of the Innocent family. This is a drunk driver who went through a stop sign, smashed into their car and smashed their bodies. But Noel Fault, as a result of Bill 68, would be cleared of any liability, would be protected from any liability for his damage, his injuries inflicted on members of the Innocent family. Mr and Mrs Innocent, with their two insurance policies with the Peter and Son Insurance Co—and other than the collision loss, not one penny was payable to any member of the Innocent family under either policy. You are talking about Bill 68 as a piece of legislation that will compensate people for smashed vehicles but will not compensate them for smashed and torn bodies.

Now up to December 1993, as you know, Mr Speaker, Noel Fault had received many thousands of dollars from his own insurer as wage replacement because he had not yet been convicted of drunk or impaired driving. The Innocents ask how such an unjust result happened in an enlightened society like Ontario.

Did I tell members? In December 1993, when they are at their lawyer's office, his lawyer, one Great Scott, would tell them that his job as a lawyer is just to interpret the law, that he does not make it. Despondent and dejected, the Innocents would leave Great Scott's office, go home, probably call the friend who had referred them to that same lawyer, one Great Scott, and say, "Look, is there anybody else you can have us go see?" Having been referred to a second lawyer, that lawyer could listen to the suffering and disruption that this family had endured for close to two years, but all he would be able to offer them would be his sympathy. He would undoubtedly tell them that it is his duty to tell them that if they had sustained the injuries and losses before Bill 68 was passed, they would be compensated justly for pain and suffering, for loss of enjoyment of life, for excess economic loss, for loss of companionship and for loss of opportunities.

Young Chris Innocent would have been compensated for the lost fees that she paid to the tennis club for the summer tennis camp in Florida. If those injuries had been imposed on them prior to the passage of Bill 68 they would have been compensated as innocent injured victims, but those injuries having been incurred in 1992, not a penny of compensation, yet the drunk driver receives in excess of \$50,000.

Needless to say, the Innocents, when told that in December 1993, are dumfounded. They say, "You mean we get nothing

and yet the drunk driver gets in excess of \$50,000?" and they would exclaim, "What's wrong?" They would exclaim: "That can't be. That's not justice. What can we do?" By 1992 or 1993, or even by 1991, if the Liberals pass Bill 68, it will have been too late. I tell members this, if there is not a full debate about Bill 68, as Bill 68 warrants, it will be passed in a perfunctory way. The time allocation motion that the Liberals have imposed on this Legislature and that we are debating now would give but two brief afternoons for discussion of Bill 68 in committee of the whole.

During that time, the Liberals would be presenting some 30-plus amendments to clean up the drafting shortcomings of the bill, and then the Conservative Party has some 20-plus amendments of their own. In two brief afternoons the amendments being proposed would not even be read, never mind any opportunity to ask the Minister of Financial Institutions about how it can be that Bill 68 could treat a drunk driver better than an innocent injured victim.

This has to be asked of the Minister of Financial Institutions: How could it be that a victim like Chris Innocent would not even be compensated for the fees she paid for a summer tennis camp in Florida, as an innocent injured victim? How can it be that a young man like Jack Innocent who, as a result of his injuries received as an innocent injured victim, when he loses a year of medical school and has a delayed entry of one year into the workforce and loses a year's income as a young doctor, how can it be that he as an innocent injured victim is not compensated for that?

1730

How can it be that Bill 68 would compensate people for a damaged car, but refuse to compensate them for broken bones and smashed vertebrae, torn tendons and ripped nerves? That is why we need full debate about Bill 68, because these are incredibly contentious issues that call out for full debate. People across the province have concern about what Bill 68 will do for them.

That is why Robert Woodward phoned in this afternoon, to say that he just called the Premier's office to lodge his opposition to Bill 68. That is why Gary Shillington from Mississauga says, "Good for the opposition and too bad for the Liberals if they persist in this time allocation motion." That is why David Martin from Sarnia phoned this afternoon and said, "It's about time politicians started listening to the people of Ontario and Canada, on both the provincial and the federal levels."

Remember when we talked about Mr Justice Haines's critique of Bill 68? We noted that Mr Justice Haines concluded that if Bill 68 is passed—and I say if it is passed without full debate—then the people of Ontario will almost inevitably come to the conclusion that they have been sold out by their government in exchange for the interests of the auto insurance industry. What is worthy of remark is that that is not solely the opinion of Mr Justice Haines. That reflection is being made by people daily in their calls to Queen's Park. That is exactly what people like David Martin from Sarnia are talking about. He says that it is time that politicians started listening to the people of Ontario and Canada, on both the provincial and federal levels.

People are making the link between the Liberals at Queen's Park and the Tories on Parliament Hill. The people of Ontario are understanding that just as the Parliament Hill Tories will use closure to force the GST on the people of Canada, the Liberals here at Queen's Park will use closure, time allocation, to force Bill 68 on the people of Ontario. The GST is no more justifiable than Bill 68 is here at Queen's Park.

Douglas Weir of Toronto phoned in and said he opposed Bill 68, and he wants full debate, which means that we have to defeat this time allocation motion. Douglas Dalzell is a man from Elmira, Ontario. Douglas Dalzell from Elmira says that the fight has to be kept up. He refers back to the Magna Carta and talks about how significant that was in our history and how this motion by the Liberals is an assault on that centuries-old tradition that the Magna Carta embodies.

That is why Joey Boissonneault calls from North Bay and finds disdain with respect for democracy by the Liberal government unbelievable.

That is why People to Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere sends a letter.

Mr Philip: That's John Bates, isn't it?

Mr Kormos: PRIDE's president is John Bates. He sends a letter which says:

"Dear Peter:

"Thank you for your tenacious efforts on behalf of the people of Ontario."

Mr Philip: Friendly people who live in Etobicoke.

Mr Kormos: The personalities are quite irrelevant, I suppose, but what is significant is the need for full debate, the need for full discussion, the need for an opportunity, as I have said, to convince enough Liberal backbenchers to simply vote against time allocation and then, given enough time to adequately debate Bill 68, to vote against Bill 68.

Did you see this copy of Toronto Life, Mr Speaker, from March 1990? The feature article and the cover story is on how to fight back. Here is this great big guy here acting arrogant with his arms crossed and his chest puffed out and here is this little feisty scrapper there, much smaller, but you see this big arrogant guy with the smirk on his face, with his arms crossed, is like the Liberals here at Queen's Park: smirking, a look of disdain on his face, a smear, no respect for tradition, no respect for the community, no respect for the rights of citizens. And here is an opposition. It is not a big opposition. We wish it were bigger. We wish that we did not have to fight so hard to defeat the time allocation motion. We wish that there were enough members of the opposition to simply vote it down. We wish, Mr Speaker, that we did not have to fight so hard about Bill 68 that we would have to plead with you and with the members of this Legislative Assembly to permit a lengthier debate than is being permitted by virtue of the time allocation motion, this closure motion. But do you know what, Mr Speaker? This big arrogant bully here does not have the support of the people of Ontario, and I say the opposition here at Queen's Park, albeit perhaps small in numbers does.

That is why Jane Sparrow from Windsor would phone in to say that she opposes Bill 68 and urges the opposition on.

That is why Barry Day from Haliburton would phone in at 5:25 this afternoon, insulted, he says, with what the Liberals are doing. They have lost sight of their purpose, and he would insist that this be an election issue.

That is why Bill Horne from Wasaga Beach would phone this afternoon, as a veteran and a senior citizen, and say that if Bill 68 goes through he will not be able to afford insurance, he will have to give up his car, and there is no public transit in Wasaga Beach.

That is why Dennis Chamberlain from Thunder Bay would call and say that he has been watching what has been happening here at Queen's Park for the last two weeks and that the time used in this House over this debate is not the opposition's fault but is the fault of the Liberals, because the end of this debate

could occur like that. All the Liberal House leader has to do is stand up and withdraw that crummy motion.

1740

That is why Ron Buck from Willowdale would phone in and say, "Keep up the good work." Ron Buck would say that, as a result of that work, he is going to join the NDP.

That is why Bill Taylor, who called from St Catharines, said to us that he hoped the next message that would be brought to me would be one from the member for Guelph, wherein the member for Guelph would say that yes, the government will debate Bill 68, that the government will abandon its time allocation motion, that the government will take off its jackboots and talk about the issues so that the members of this Legislative Assembly can make a learned decision based on reason and not based on their sense of devotion to a greedy, greedy, powerful auto insurance industry.

That is why Lloyd Styles from Waterloo would call, mad as one could ever be, just mad as all get out, about the Liberals' effort to impose closure on the opposition here at Queen's Park. That is why Lloyd Styles would say that he has got full support for the opposition on the time closure argument and on the issue of Bill 68 itself.

That is why Dan Arnold would call from Belgrave, Ontario. Dan Arnold from Belgrave would say: "Keep going. Bury the Liberals." He voted Liberal last election, but not again. Dan Arnold from Belgrave voted Liberal before, but not if Bill 68 gets passed. And that is the whole point.

Sadly, I guess, for their own personal careers and for their families, there are Liberal members of this Legislature who, if they support Bill 68, are going to be defeated in the next general election. They have an opportunity. There are Liberal backbenchers right here at Queen's Park who have an opportunity to maintain the support of their constituents, if only they would stand up and say, loudly and clearly, "No, I'm not going to be part of a scenario that is being manipulated and controlled and directed by the auto insurance industry," if those same Liberal members would shake off the grip that the auto insurance industry has on their caucus and say: "No, I've had enough of the auto insurance industry. This time I'm going to vote for my constituents. This time I'm going to vote for the people I represent here at Queen's Park, the people of my riding. This time I'm going to vote for the people of Willowdale," or Etobicoke West, or York East, or Carleton East. Those same Liberals members would probably be re-elected in the next general election, if they stood up and voted against Bill 68, if they voted for the drivers, the taxpayers and the innocent injured victims instead of voting for the auto insurance companies of Ontario, because what they are going to learn is that drivers can vote, auto insurance companies cannot.

Frank Cesario from Weston, Ontario, phoned this afternoon to indicate that he is fully behind the opposition, that he used to be a Liberal but not any more, because of Bill 68 and because of this time allocation motion. Frank Cesario from Weston is one more person among thousands and tens and hundreds of thousands of voters in this province who are not going to be voting for their Liberal members next time, if their Liberal members persist in supporting Bill 68.

Robert Begin from Stoney Creek phoned in and said he has been watching for three weeks now. He is pleased with the job that the opposition is doing on this time allocation motion. He says he was a 40-year Liberal who, because of Bill 68, no more. Robert Begin knows that Bill 68 is an attack on the drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims in Ontario and that the

only real reason why Liberals would support Bill 68 is because they want to enhance the profits of the auto insurance industry to the tune of \$1 billion in the first year alone. Well, Robert Begin is like thousands and thousands of other people in this province who used to vote Liberal but will not vote Liberal any more, because of Bill 68.

Here is a message from Fred Green of St Catharines. He says that he is against Bill 68. Here is a message from Tammy Hagar and her father Melvin from Matheson, Ontario, who are opposed to Bill 68 and to time allocation. Matt Napier calls this afternoon and says no to time allocation, says no to no-fault, says no to the Liberal auto insurance scheme.

Lesley Penwarden from St Catharines calls and expresses great concern about the assault on democracy that this Liberal time allocation motion means. That is what it is. It is a direct attack on democracy. It is a direct attack on fairness. It is a direct attack on the rights of every driver, every taxpayer, every victim right here in the province of Ontario. That is what this Liberal time allocation motion is.

Lesley Penwarden will not have anything to do with it. She calls this a horrendous piece of legislation. She talks of the Liberals as a government that cannot see the forest for the trees. She says that the government is unaware that it is a minion for the large corporations who are manipulating it. They are transforming our society from a democratic one to a new corporate federalism. A new corporate federalism, that is what Lesley Penwarden says the Liberals are all about.

Sarah Truax from Bruce Street in Welland calls and she says there should be a debate on Bill 68, that Bill 68 is serious enough and complex enough and significant enough to warrant full and meaningful debate.

Vicky Mason from Nepean says it is time for democracy in Ontario, not a dictatorship. Time allocation is important to Ms Mason. Time allocation is important to Ms Mason because she thinks that Bill 68 is significant enough that it warrants full and lengthy debate, full and thorough debate.

Don Comi, the president of the Niagara District Injured Workers' Organization, has great concern with the auto insurance bill that is being proposed. He feels that the Liberal government is ramming it through. He asks, "Don't they have any concern for the voters in Ontario?" People like Don Comi from the Niagara District Injured Workers' Organization are trying to give a message to the Liberals here at Queen's Park that the voters are concerned, that the voters are vitally interested in whether or not there is full debate on Bill 68. The voters of Ontario would insist on full debate of Bill 68.

Dustin Luckett from Port Hope calls in to the opposition saying, "Keep it up," and insists that the time allocation motion be abandoned by withdrawal by the mover, the Liberal House leader, or defeated with enough support from Liberal backbenchers.

William and Robert Ayling from Toronto phone in and they are from the riding of York South. They say, "Keep the pressure on." They are very disturbed. William and Robert Ayling from York South are very disturbed that there is not going to be full debate on Bill 68. They are very disturbed about that.

1750

Ian Smith of Port Colborne phones up. He supports what the opposition is doing because he knows that Bill 68 requires meaningful debate if the people of Ontario are going to be adequately served. It requires meaningful debate if we are going to be able to persuade the 30 or 35 Liberal backbenchers to vote against the legislation, those 30 or 35 Liberal back-

benchers who want to keep their jobs as members of the provincial Parliament, those 30 or 35 Liberal backbenchers who have the courage to abandon the interests of the big auto insurance companies and to start looking out for the interests of drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims here in the province of Ontario.

David Small, a student here in Toronto, thinks it is very important that we speak out for the drivers, taxpayers and victims, and he thinks it is important that the time allocation motion be defeated.

These are all people who have called me at 965-7714 here at Queen's Park. They have called my Queen's Park number, 965-7714, and we are pleased to be able to talk to them. Come tomorrow morning, those same people may well call the Premier of Ontario right here at Queen's Park. Those people who call us and who are concerned about what is happening here in this Legislature by virtue of this time allocation motion have a right to let the Premier know that too; and maybe, just maybe, the Premier will tell the Liberal House leader to withdraw the motion.

If those people want to call the Premier tomorrow, they should call him at 416-965-1941, and the people who do not live in Toronto, the people calling from Welland, Nepean, Port Hope or Thunder Bay or from all those places across Ontario that they have been calling from, should call collect. They should call the Premier collect at 965-1941 and they should insist on talking to the Premier himself. They should not take any guff from his staff. They should tell his staff that they want to talk directly with the Premier of Ontario because they pay his wages.

All those people who want this time allocation motion defeated pay the wages of the Premier of Ontario and they should insist that he talk to them so they can tell him to tell his Liberal House leader to withdraw this time allocation motion so that we can talk about Bill 68. That is all we have ever wanted to do.

Scott Cullen from Welland gave us a call this afternoon. He is going to try to call the Premier too. Scott Cullen called to say that he and his family are 100 per cent opposed to time allocation.

Don Hickey in Mississauga acknowledges, like a lot of people have, and Don Hickey has never voted New Democrat, that he will have nothing to do with the time allocation motion of the Liberals. Don Hickey from Mississauga wants to hear a full debate on time allocation.

Frances Nand from Mississauga used to be a hard-core Liberal supporter. Frances Nand calls and says, "No support for them, a bunch of thugs." Frances Nand is totally disgusted. That is what this time allocation motion is doing in communities across Ontario, not just here in Toronto but in places like Belleville that Rachel Ence calls from and says that she is scared to death of Bill 68 and that she wants it opposed. She wants the time allocation motion opposed so that there can be a full debate about Bill 68.

George Tkaczyk from Mississauga is totally opposed to Bill 68. This gentleman wants there to be a full debate about all the issues surrounding Bill 68 and all the impact it is going to have on drivers and taxpayers and innocent injured victims here in the province of Ontario.

John Greco of Huntley Street in Toronto calls in to say, "Thanks for reminding the Liberals what democracy is about." His insurance premiums doubled; they went up by 100 per cent. Why? Because he went to Florida for six months and his insurance had to lapse. John Greco knows that he cannot count on

the Liberals in Ontario to protect his interests when it comes to auto insurance companies and he knows that he certainly cannot rely on the auto insurance companies.

Don Morris from Mississauga is "disgusted with the way the Liberals are trying to ram the bill down our throats." He does not want to see this time allocation motion succeed; he wants to see it defeated.

Mr and Mrs Hamilton from Hogdon Avenue in Toronto call. Mr Hamilton is a senior. His premium already went up 25 per cent. So much for caps on premium increases. Mr Hamilton was probably a victim of the premium shuffle. Remember the Scottish and York Insurance Co Ltd and Victoria Insurance Co of Canada flip?

Again, that is why the Liberals do not want to debate Bill 68. They do not want to have to be accountable for how it is that they could have let the insurance companies run roughshod over drivers and victims in Ontario. Mr and Mrs Hamilton ask, "If the Liberals are for this, then why are they afraid of debate? Why do the Liberals flee from debate if they are so supportive of Bill 68?"

Here is an interesting comment from Claire Agranov from Essex Street here in Toronto. Claire Agranov is an insurance agent. She says: "No fault, no way. It just can't be permitted to go through. It is going to hurt too many people. There has to be a full debate about it in this Legislature so that people of Ontario can see and hear all the issues being canvassed." Otherwise, it is nothing but jackboot politics.

Wayne Fleming from Eglinton Avenue East in Toronto calls and says, "Keep it up." Mr Fleming does not want to see a time allocation motion.

Peter Holt from Fourth Street on Ward's Island here in Toronto says, "No way to no-fault," and he does not want to see a time allocation motion imposed on the people of Ontario.

That is really whom it is being imposed on. It is not being imposed just on the opposition. This motion before us right now imposes closure not just on the New Democrats, not just on the Progressive Conservatives at Queen's Park; it imposes closure on all Ontario. It imposes closure on all the drivers, all the taxpayers and all the innocent injured victims, both today and tomorrow, in Ontario.

Dan Colquhoun from Kitchener calls and talks about "the serious negative ramifications of Bill 68" and insists that they be debated.

Michael Cacaba from Castlefield Avenue in Toronto calls and says that the opposition is doing a good job. He encourages the opposition to keep up the good work. He says no way to no-fault and no way to time allocation, because it is closure not just on the New Democrats, closure not just on the Conservatives, but closure on all of the people in Ontario.

Ken and Joyce Green from Guelph, Ontario phone and understand that what we are trying to do is to get the government to run this province the way it should be run, by the will of the people. Ken and Joyce Green tell us that they have always voted Liberal, but they will never vote Liberal again because of this time allocation motion. Of course, I know you want to thank Ken and Joyce Green, Mr Speaker.

On motion by Mr Kormos, the debate was adjourned.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Mr Ward: Pursuant to standing order 53, I should like to read the business for next week:

On Monday 23 April, we will proceed with the government notice of motion 30 and second reading of Bills 108, 96, 107,

106 and 114. On Tuesday, the House will recess after routine proceedings and the budget will be presented at 4 pm.

On Wednesday, we will proceed with any unfinished business carried over from Monday, followed by the response of the official opposition to the budget. On Thursday in the morning, it

will be private members' business in the names of Mr Sterling and Mr Carrothers. In the afternoon, it will be any unfinished business from the previous days of the week, followed by the official opposition response to the budget.

The House adjourned at 1801.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

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|--|---|
| Adams, Peter (Peterborough L) | Grandmaître, Bernard C. (Ottawa East L) |
| Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP) | Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP) |
| Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L) | Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L) |
| Beer, Hon Charles , Minister of Community and Social Services (York North L) | Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP) |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. , Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L) | Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC) |
| Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L) | Hart, Hon Christine E. , Minister of Culture and Communications (York East L) |
| Bradley, Hon James J. , Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L) | Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L) |
| Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC) | Hošek, Chaviva (Oakwood L) |
| Breaugh, Michael J., First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House (Oshawa NDP) | Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC) |
| Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L) | Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC) |
| Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP) | Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP) |
| Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L) | Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L) |
| Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L) | Kerrio, Vincent G. (Niagara Falls L) |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor , Minister of Health (Oriole L) | Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L) |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L) | Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP) |
| Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP) | Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L) |
| Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L) | Kwinter, Hon Monte , Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L) |
| Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L) | Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP) |
| Collins, Hon Shirley , Minister without Portfolio (Wentworth East L) | LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L) |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. , Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development (Renfrew North L) | Leone, Laureano (Downsview L) |
| Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L) | Lipsett, Ron (Grey L) |
| Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP) | Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L) |
| Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L) | MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings L) |
| Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC) | Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP) |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC) | Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L) |
| Cureatz, Sam L., Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House (Durham East PC) | Mancini, Hon Remo , Minister of Revenue (Essex South L) |
| Curling, Alvin (Scarborough North L) | Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC) |
| Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L) | Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP) |
| Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L) | Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L) |
| Eakins, John F. (Victoria-Haliburton L) | McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC) |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. , Speaker (Perth L) | McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L) |
| Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L) | McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L) |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. , Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L) | McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC) |
| Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L) | McLeod, Hon Lyn , Minister of Energy and Minister of Natural Resources (Fort William L) |
| Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC) | Miclash, Frank (Kenora L) |
| Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP) | Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L) |
| Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L) | Morin, Hon Gilles E. , Minister without Portfolio (Carleton East L) |
| Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L) | Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste Marie NDP) |
| Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L) | Neumann, David E. (Brantford L) |
| Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L) | Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L) |
| Fontaine, Hon René , Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L) | Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L) |
| Fulton, Ed (Scarborough East L) | Nixon, Hon Robert F. , Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L) |
| Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L) | Oddie Munro, Lily (Hamilton Centre L) |
| | Offer, Hon Steven , Solicitor General (Mississauga North L) |
| | O'Neil, Hon Hugh P. , Minister of Mines (Quinte L) |
| | O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L) |
| | Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L) |

Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Correctional Services
(Ottawa Centre L)

Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)

Peterson, Hon David R., Premier and President of the Council
and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
(London Centre L)

Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)

Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Labour
(Scarborough-Agincourt L)

Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of
the Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)

Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)

Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)

Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)

Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)

Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)

Rae, Bob (York South NDP)

Ramsay, Hon David, Minister of Agriculture and Food
(Timiskaming L)

Ray, Michael C. (Windsor-Walkerville L)

Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)

Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Riddell, Jack (Huron L)

Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)

Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)

Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)

Scott, Hon Ian G., Attorney General (St George-St David L)

Smith, David W. (Lambton L)

Smith, E. Joan (London South L)

Sola, John (Mississauga East L)

Sorbara, Hon Gregory S., Minister of Consumer and
Commercial Relations (York Centre L)

South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)

Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)

Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)

Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)

Sweeney, Hon John, Minister of Housing and Minister of
Municipal Affairs (Kitchener-Wilmot L)

Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)

Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Ward, Hon Christopher C., Minister of Government Services
(Wentworth North L)

Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)

Wilson, Hon Mavis, Minister without Portfolio
(Dufferin-Peel L)

Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

Wong, Hon Robert C., Minister of Citizenship (Fort York L)

Wrye, Hon William, Minister of Transportation
(Windsor-Sandwich L)

Vacant, Ottawa South

*Lists of members of the executive council, parliamentary
assistants and members of committees are published in
Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the
first sitting day of each month.*

CONTENTS

Thursday 19 April 1990

Private members' public business

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Ontario young travellers program, resolution 48 | 645 |
| Mr Kozyra | 645 |
| Mr Wildman | 646 |
| Mr McLean | 647 |
| Mr D. R. Cooke | 648 |
| Mr Pollock | 649 |
| Mr Brown | 650 |
| Mr J. M. Johnson | 650 |
| Agreed to | 651 |

Royal assent

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| His Honour the Lieutenant Governor | 651 |
|------------------------------------|---------------|

Members' statements

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Religious education | 652 |
| Mr R. F. Johnston | |
| Agricultural funding | 652 |
| Mr J. M. Johnson | |
| Youth gangs | 652 |
| Mr Faubert | |
| Doctors' fees | 652 |
| Mr Reville | |
| Earth Day | 652 |
| Mr Sterling | |
| Interest rates | 653 |
| Mr Matrundola | |
| Education financing | 653 |
| Mr R. F. Johnston | |
| Victims of crime | 653 |
| Mr Jackson | |
| Anniversary of Katyn forest massacre | 653 |
| Mr Ruprecht | |

Statements by the ministry

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Local government accountability | 654 |
| Mr Sweeney | |
| National Consumer Week | 654 |
| Mr Sorbara | |

Responses

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Local government accountability | 655 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mr Sterling | |
| National Consumer Week | 655 |
| Mr Cousens | |

Oral questions

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Affordable housing | 656 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mr Sweeney | |
| Soft drink containers | 657 |
| Mrs Grier | |
| Mr Bradley | |
| Patricia Starr inquiry | 658 |
| Mr Brandt | |
| Mr Scott | |
| Children's mental health services | 659 |
| Mr Brandt | |
| Mr Beer | |
| Mr Allen | |
| Abuse of the elderly | 660 |
| Mrs Cunningham | |
| Mr Beer | |
| Native services | 661 |
| Mr Adams | |
| Mr Scott | |
| Sault Ste Marie Family Services Centre | 661 |
| Mr Wildman | |
| Mr Beer | |
| Greater Toronto area rapid transit | 662 |
| Mr Cousens | |
| Mr Wrye | |
| Occupational health and safety | 662 |
| Mr D. R. Cooke | |
| Mr Phillips | |
| Greater Toronto area rapid transit | 663 |
| Mr Mackenzie | |
| Mr Wrye | |
| Disabled students | 663 |
| Mr Sterling | |
| Mr Conway | |

Petitions

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Hospital beds | 664 |
| Mr Brandt | |
| Motor vehicle registration fees | 664 |
| Mr Philip | |
| Trespass to property legislation | 664 |
| Mr Sterling | |

Report by committee

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Standing committee on the Ombudsman | 664 |
| Mr Velshi | |
| Adjourned | 664 |

| First readings | Government motion |
|---|---|
| Municipal Statute Law Amendment Act, 1990, | Time allocation, motion 30 665 |
| Bill 152 664 | Mr Kormos |
| Mr Sweeney | Adjourned 682 |
| Agreed to 664 | |
| Public Lands Amendment Act, 1990, Bill 153 664 | Other business |
| Mr Haggerty | Afternoon sitting 652 |
| Agreed to 664 | Business of the House 682 |
| Non-Unionized Workers Protection Act, 1990, | Mr Ward |
| Bill 154 665 | Adjournment 683 |
| Mr Haggerty | Alphabetical list of members 684 |
| Agreed to 665 | |

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Le jeudi 19 avril 1990

| Déclaration ministérielle | Pétition |
|--|--|
| Semaine nationale des consommateurs 654 | Construction de deux écoles 664 |
| M. Sorbara | M. Poirier |



20 90

20 90

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 23 April 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le lundi 23 avril 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Languages in Hansard

Hansard reports all debates in English or French as spoken by the participants. It does not translate remarks made in either language. Headings and tables of contents reflect language use.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 23 April 1990

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

SOCIAL SERVICE GRADUATES

Mr Kormos: The Legislature today is graced with the presence of a number of Niagara College students who came here from Welland this morning and who are sitting as close to the government as they can, hoping that the government will turn its deaf ear to them, listen to what they have to say and indeed hear, for once, what they have to say.

These students are first- and second-year social service students from Niagara College of Applied Arts and Technology. Earlier today Ralph Martin, Mark Jarrett and Leanne Saxton spoke with the media and other personnel here at Queen's Park. These people aspire to perform work in their communities which will benefit those people who need their help, those people who require the voice, the advocacy, the assistance and the counsel of people like these good people who will be graduating from social service programs.

These same people, good people, qualified and competent people like Goldie Hill, Rick Lutz, Phil Durrant and Lynn Bird, are deathly afraid, and so are their teachers, that by virtue of being community college graduates they are going to be excluded from the legislation being considered by this government; that is to say, that this government will disregard the talents and skills of community college social service graduates in favour of only those people who have BSWs or MSWs.

I say, on behalf of those people, that such an exclusion would be wrong. It would be unfair to them and, more important, it would be unfair to the thousands of people who would benefit from these social service graduates' skills in their fields and in their communities.

EDUCATION FINANCING

Mr Jackson: Liberals are fond of bragging about their commitment to education but, on the eve of the Treasurer's budget, it is time to set the record straight on the true state of education finance in this province. In 1985-86 the government allocated 19 cents of every dollar to school boards, colleges and universities; in 1989-90 it is still 19 cents per dollar. This puts the Liberals' claims of exaggerated increases in perspective.

When the education community illustrates its need for more operational support, Liberals say the \$320-million cut from health and post-secondary education federal transfer payments has tied their hands. Yet what they fail to mention is the fact that the federal government will lose over \$450 million because of the new Ontario employer health tax. The EHT will cost school boards an estimated \$85 million and universities over \$24 million. It looks like our tax-grabbing Treasurer is the big winner again.

School boards received an 8.7 per cent increase. But in reality they will only get a 2.7 per cent base increase. So-called Liberal generosity cost property taxpayers \$1 billion last year and is expected to cost another \$800 million this year for education alone. Universities received 8 per cent. In reality, they will only get a 1.8 per cent base increase.

What, in fact, we have is a commitment to Liberal pronouncements in education but not to funding education properly.

NATIVE LANGUAGE CONFERENCE

Mr Neumann: I would like to make all members aware of an extremely significant event which is occurring in Brantford this coming weekend. The Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council Inc is hosting the Keepers of Our Language conference at the Woodland Cultural Centre from 26 April through to 29 April.

This conference is designed to encourage greater knowledge and understanding of aboriginal languages. I was surprised to learn recently from one of the conference's organizers that only 2.1 per cent of the native population in southern Ontario is able to speak the native languages.

Pride in native culture and traditions can be enhanced by strengthened native language programs. I am pleased that the native community branch of the Ministry of Citizenship has provided a grant of \$20,000 to help Sweetgrass to organize this conference. Registrations have been received from all over Ontario and from the northern United States.

A very busy agenda is planned for the four days and participants will have the opportunity to speak in their particular native languages and to share their ideas and to help encourage more native Canadians to learn and utilize the languages used by their ancestors.

I am certainly encouraged, as the representative for Brantford, by the initiative of the Woodland Indian Cultural Centre in the many activities they sponsor at that centre for Indians across Canada. I know that all members will join me in wishing the Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council Inc every success with this conference.

EARTH DAY

Mrs Grier: Yesterday, as everyone knows, was Earth Day. Twenty years ago, when Earth Day was celebrated for the first time, not very many people in Canada acknowledged it. But yesterday hundreds of thousands of people turned out to march, to clean up parks and to plant trees. What they were saying was: "We love this planet. We love this Earth. We want the governments that represent us to get on with cleaning it up."

I was pleased to spend Earth Day with the Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment to speak to its annual meeting. The criticisms that I was able to make of this government's handling of the Niagara Escarpment Commission apply far more generally to its environmental policies and the lack of commitment to environmental land use planning. Where are the food land guidelines? Remember Project X, a proposal to gut the Environmental Assessment Act? It has not gone away; it has merely gone underground.

The lack of adequate funding for the Niagara Escarpment Commission mirrors the lack of funding to the Ministry of the Environment. The refusal to rule out the possibility of garbage dumps on the escarpment is the failure of this government to deal with solid waste. The system of appointments to the commission—do not forget the promise in the accord that there would be a committee to look at how public appointments will be made.

Yesterday people were showing how far they have come in understanding the threat to our earth and in their willingness to take tough action. People are saying to the government: "Make every day Earth Day. Don't wait for 22 April to roll around again or to call an election before improving the environment."

1340

REBECCA JONES

Mr Eves: Deborah and Stephen Jones of Parry Sound are the parents of a nine-year-old girl, Rebecca, who suffers from cerebral palsy and is wheelchair-bound. In the past year, Mr Jones has been diagnosed himself with multiple sclerosis and, as a result, has found it necessary to accept alternative employment in Parry Sound. This has resulted in a decrease in his wages.

The area manager for the northeastern area of the Ministry of Community and Social Services recommended that a benefit of \$24,980 be provided to Mr and Mrs Jones on behalf of their daughter, Rebecca, in order that the Joneses might purchase a wheelchair-accessible van.

I first brought this recommendation to the attention of the Minister of Community and Social Services on 30 November 1989, although I am sure that the minister was well aware of it before that time. In my letter I stated my support for this recommendation of the northeastern area office. Due to a decrease in Mr Jones's wages, there is no possible way that he and his wife can afford this van, which is necessary to transport Rebecca to and from her various medical appointments.

I would also like to remind the members of the House that the Ministry of Health does not recognize the northern status of Parry Sound, so the Joneses do not receive any financial support from the northern health travel grant program either.

I would like to express my frustration and that of the Joneses at the fact that my letter of 30 November 1989 has not yet been responded to. I spoke to the minister in the House about this situation. He told me he would look into it, yet days later his special agreements officer wrote a letter indicating that no funding would be forthcoming—

The Speaker: The member's time has expired. Thank you.

BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr Campbell: Today I wish to draw the attention of all the members of the House to the outstanding efforts of the Laurentian University Lady Vee's basketball team.

A few weeks ago, the Lady Vee's won the national university women's basketball championship against the formidable Calgary Dinosaurs 74 to 65. The squad demonstrated, as it has all season, superb skill and true team effort. The captain of the Lady Vee's is Shirlene McLean. She scored a game-leading 22 points and was named most valuable player in the Canadian Interuniversity Athletic Union women's basketball championships.

As a result of her efforts during the finals and throughout the season, Ms McLean was named Laurentian University's Female Athlete of the Year for the second consecutive year.

The Lady Vee's have been expertly coached for many years by Peter Ennis. This summer Mr Ennis will be one of the assistant coaches of the national women's team.

Laurentian University boasts a wide variety of athletic teams. Again this year these men and women have displayed tremendous skill and sportsmanship and have placed extremely well in competition.

I feel the Lady Vee's deserve special recognition for their accomplishments in 1989-90 and I wish to extend my congratulations to the players, coaching staff and to all who have contributed to their success.

CAPITAL FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS

Miss Martel: Most recently, the Sudbury Board of Education and the Sudbury District Roman Catholic Separate School Board forwarded their proposed list of capital expenditures to the Ministry of Education. Several comments must be made in this regard.

The English section of the public board has a serious need for partial roof replacements at both Larchwood and Ernie Checkeris elementary schools. Seven other schools require modifications for handicapped facilities, 16 need boiler replacements and another 19 require partial reroofing or roof replacements.

The French section of the same board has three priority capital projects requiring funding. The first is a new public elementary school in New Sudbury. The second and third include permanent elementary schools in Valley East and Rayside-Balfour. At present, both schools are portable schools with no gym facilities.

The separate school board's main priority is a new English secondary school within city limits. The capacity required is for 1,300 students. At present, Marymount College has 18 portables on site used by 450 students daily on average. St Charles College has 12 portables on campus, and on average 350 students use them daily. From there, funding has been requested for renovations and additions to a number of other schools, in addition to the needs of boiler replacements, roof replacements etc.

Both boards have capital project needs that are long-standing. If this Liberal government is committed to quality education in Ontario, then it must begin to meet these needs.

EARTH DAY

Mr Jackson: As all members of the House are aware, Sunday 22 April marked the international observance of Earth Day. Yesterday's many environmental projects and activities, which were participated in by thousands of people in Canada and around the world, brought to everyone's attention the important role of the environment and its interdependent relationship with humanity.

Earth Day served as a sobering reminder to all that the damage we inflict on the environment is also a direct threat to human survival. Environmental lessons which we learned yesterday, however, must be put into practice by us throughout the year if we are to begin to reverse attitudes of environmental indifference and destructiveness in society.

One such lesson is that we as individuals can and should make a difference in the fight against pollution, first and foremost by altering our own personal and family lifestyle behaviour patterns with respect to what we do with the waste we produce every day.

It is in this that the Liberal government's often merely reactive environmental programs are most seriously lacking. Whether the issue is the Hagersville tire fire, the Temagami forests or responsible environmental practices in the home, this government needs to take seriously the challenge issued to it yesterday regarding proactive environmental solutions before tragedy strikes.

The Ontario government's environmental programs need to work on the assumption that every day is indeed Earth Day.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr D. W. Smith: I want to tell the members of this House that at this moment there is test drilling taking place on a property in Plympton township to determine the quality and quantity of soil for a possible landfill site for the use of the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto.

I have met many times with a group called C-PAL, which stands for Citizens of Plympton Against Landfill, which is opposed to Metro Toronto garbage coming into Lambton county and specifically Plympton township. A letter I have read suggests that Metro Toronto is proposing to investigate a possible site for its landfill in Plympton township because of the opposition from ratepayers in other chosen locations. They should understand that they will face tremendous opposition from the people in Plympton township at this proposed site, and I want to add that I am supporting their fight.

I believe the government of Ontario has been working towards the reduction of waste that we put in landfill sites, but I think that the time has come to allow for more burning of waste so as to lessen the amount of landfill space required. I believe the technology is also available to make use of burning some waste for energy or for other purposes that have been proven acceptable, such as composting.

I think the ratepayers in my riding of Lambton are saying very forcefully that they do not want other people's garbage and it is time to try different methods of disposing of waste in a more productive manner.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

TEMAGAMI DISTRICT RESOURCES

Hon Mrs McLeod: This morning I signed a historic agreement with Chief Gary Potts and Chief Rita O'Sullivan of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai and my colleague the minister responsible for native affairs.

This agreement, the first of its kind in North America, is between the province of Ontario and the Teme-Augama Anishnabai. It provides for joint stewardship of about 40,000 hectares in the Temagami forest, constituting the district townships of Delhi, Acadia, Shelburne and Canton. There are 3,800 hectares of old red and white pine stands in these four townships.

The Lake Temagami area has long been recognized as one of our most beautiful natural areas. Temagami is perhaps the most intensively managed of Ontario's forests, and our interim timber management plans reflect the environmental values of the area. The Ministry of Natural Resources will provide for no clear-cutting of old red and white pine stands.

People are aware of the various pressures and interests in the area, and the agreement we have signed today represents the kind of partnership that we are seeking with all those who have an interest in the resources of this area. The stewardship council that we are establishing for these four townships will allow us to work together to determine the best way to manage those lands. The council will include equal numbers of representatives appointed by the Teme-Augama Anishnabai and the provincial government. This agreement follows much discussion with Chief Potts and the executive council.

We have approved cutting licences today for the areas outside the four townships. No licences have been issued for Delhi, Acadia, Shelburne and Canton townships. Future decisions about the management of those four townships will be made by the council. The Teme-Augama Anishnabai will also review timber management plans for other areas of the forest.

Recognizing that this agreement will have an impact on the operations of some mills in the area, we will meet with local businesses to address short-term and long-term wood supply needs.

The four townships cover 1,805 hectares of forest that were identified for harvest in the interim timber management plans. The approved licences account for 7,386 hectares identified for harvest and will provide a timber supply to nine mills. The Ontario Development Corp has issued a statement outlining the financial situation of the Fryer group of companies, including the William Milne and Sons sawmill in Temagami.

In addition, the Temagami-Timiskaming co-ordinating committee, a group consisting of representatives of several government ministries, will continue its work to address the important issue of economic development and diversification in the Temagami area.

I am confident that the signing of today's agreement underscores the province's commitment to the cultural, environmental and economic needs of the Temagami area.

I would like to acknowledge the presence in the members' gallery today of Chief Gary Potts and Chief Rita O'Sullivan of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai.

1350

RESPONSE

TEMAGAMI DISTRICT RESOURCES

RICHESSSES NATURELLES DE LA RÉGION DE TEMAGAMI

Mr B. Rae: This is indeed an historic day. I can say to the government that it knows and I know that this proposal has been in front of it not just for a few weeks or a few days but for a matter of years. I say to the Liberal government it could have avoided an extraordinary amount of controversy, hardship and ill will if it had had the common sense to do what was crying out to be done when the proposal for a joint stewardship council was first put forward by Chief Potts and argued for by others. This must be seen as the very least the government needed to do in the circumstances.

I say to the minister who is speaking on behalf of the government today that this issue has been in front of her ministry and the government of the day for many, many years. It has taken a great deal of conflict, sacrifice and courage on the part of Chief Potts, Chief O'Sullivan and the members of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai band, and the conflict has extended far beyond the Temagami region to include vast parts of the province.

No doubt in a mood of self-congratulation the government will say, "How clever we are to have done this," but I believe this solution was there to be achieved not just a few months ago but years ago. Those who argued at that time for this solution were vilified and dismissed by the government as being unrealistic.

The Premier said they were all engaged in some sort of a fantasy action when we knew perfectly well that a solution that involved the native people and recognized the interests of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai band had to be the foundation of a settlement in the Temagami region. It had to be there. It has taken arrests, it has taken conflict and we all know it has taken the prospect of an election to get this government to see the light of day. That is what it has taken. There is no other way to describe it.

I can tell the minister, and I am sure she is aware of it, that Chief Potts and I and members of his band have had several meetings, that even over the last four months I pulled together a group of trade unionists and community leaders as well as Chief Potts, to talk about the need for a stewardship council. I would urge the minister, when she is considering the makeup of the stewardship council in terms of the other interests in Temagami, to look to the leadership of the local community, to look to the trade union movement and to look to the great deal of interest that has been shown by the woodworkers, by the steelworkers and by others in terms of finding a solution to this particular problem.

I also want to say that this can only be seen very much as a first necessary step in pulling together the elements in the community which have to be pulled together. It is not good enough to dismiss as extremists those who see the environment and the future of the resource as important. It will not do any more to engage in that kind of rhetoric. It will not do any more to see those who want to save the resource for future generations as somehow being irresponsible when it comes to jobs. It will not do to take that kind of an approach.

It is also essential that this government stop resisting in the courts and stop fighting in the courts the claim by the Teme-Augama Anishnabai that they do indeed have aboriginal rights to land they and their people have occupied not for a few years but for thousands of years. These are the steps that we must take.

On a fait des progrès importants mais, tout de même, c'est seulement la première étape. Nous devons reconnaître tous les intérêts dans la région : les intérêts économiques des travailleurs et aussi ceux de la bande Teme-Augama Anishnabai. C'est essentiel pour le gouvernement de continuer le travail et de reconnaître enfin les droits territoriaux de la bande Teme-Augama Anishnabai.

This is indeed an historic day. The tragedy for Ontario is that it is a day that we could have been celebrating years ago.

Mrs Marland: We, and the Progressive Conservative caucus too, take pleasure in welcoming Chief Gary Potts and Chief Rita O'Sullivan to the Legislature this afternoon.

Obviously this is a historic agreement and obviously we are happy that it has been signed. However, the whole controversy over Temagami has been raging for far too long and we feel that a lot of the concern and a lot of the effort that a very large number of people have had to make in the interests of protecting Temagami could have been saved if this government had been willing, once and for all, to have a full environmental assessment.

They chose not to, and at the time that decision was made in consideration of the amount of time that assessment would have taken. Is it not somewhat ironical that those discussions were made three and four years ago? We could have had the full environmental assessment and that would have been over with and at least there would have been some satisfaction for those groups and individuals who are still concerned today about the future of Temagami.

We are a little concerned about the fact that this agreement is rushed. It is obviously not a complete document and we do not know any of the details of the stewardship council. We do know that only last week there was a memo from the Deputy Minister of Northern Development that said the northern economy is in a mess. We do not know what that means to the Liberal government. We know what it means to northern Ontario.

We are certainly very happy about the protection of the red and white pine—I think that goes without saying—but we are not in a position to say that we support the agreement until we see the details and understand what the impact will be. Until we see the details, we cannot be satisfied that the agreement, which has been rushed, will address all of our concerns. We only hope and pray that the concerns of the greatest number of people will be addressed finally by this Liberal government, which has chosen for so many years to avoid addressing the issue of Temagami.

PATRICIA STARR INQUIRY

The Speaker: This completes ministerial statements and responses. Just before we go on to the next order under routine proceedings, I have a fairly brief ruling that I would like to give.

On 9 April 1990, the member for Parry Sound rose on a point of order concerning the implications on the powers of the Legislative Assembly and its committees of the decision by the Supreme Court of Canada in the matter of Starr et al versus Houlden et al.

In particular, the member asked the Speaker to do the following: (1) with the assistance of the table, seek the legal opinions of three independent constitutional experts on the impact of last Thursday's Supreme Court decision on the powers of the Legislative Assembly and of the committees of this Legislature; (2) review the scope and powers of legislative committees to call witnesses and ask questions of witnesses giving particular regard to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; (3) review the scopes and powers of the Legislature of Ontario to establish committees and refer matters to committees of the Legislature for study and review.

1400

Members will know that matters raised in the point of order touch on section 92 of the Constitution Act, 1867, various sections of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, sections 36, 52, 58 and 59 of the Legislative Assembly Act and standing orders 105, 106, 107 and 123.

After considerable research and reflection, I must advise the House that I am unable to assess the procedures of the House and its committees in light of the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada. Speakers—and when I refer to Speakers I refer to chair occupants—in this Parliament and other parliaments throughout the Commonwealth have consistently held the view that the Speaker will not give a decision upon a constitutional question or decide a question of law; nor will the Speaker give a decision on a hypothetical question.

While I am without jurisdiction to deal with the point of order raised by the member for Parry Sound, there is a forum where the concerns of the member may be considered. The House has authorized the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly to review the standing orders and procedures in the House and its committees. Indeed, the committee's predecessor committees have considered a number of the matters raised by the member for Parry Sound.

In 1980 the standing committee on procedural affairs presented a Report on Witnesses Before Committees, which reviewed the status of witnesses before legislative committees. On the recommendation of the committee, the Attorney General referred the subject of witnesses before legislative committees to the Ontario Law Reform Commission. The commission's Report on Witnesses before Legislative Committees was tabled in the House in 1981 and was considered by the standing com-

mittee on procedural affairs in 1982. On 9 December 1982 the committee presented to the House a Report on Standing Orders and Procedure (No 1), which dealt in part with witnesses before legislative committees. No action was taken by the House on the committee's recommendations.

The standing committee on the Legislative Assembly may wish to give the matters raised by the member for Parry Sound further consideration. The committee has the power to retain expert staff, subject to the approval of the Board of Internal Economy, to assist in its undertaking any further review.

I thank the honourable member for bringing these very important questions to the attention of the House.

ORAL QUESTIONS

TAXATION

Mr Laughren: I have a question for the Treasurer. The Treasurer knows that every year prior to budget time we lay before him a series of proposals that would introduce some equity into his somewhat perverse tax system in the province of Ontario, and every year the Treasurer responds in a token way—only in a token way—to provide relief to low-income taxpayers in the province of Ontario.

This year it is no different. At this point in time a single person earning the minimum wage of \$5 an hour will still pay \$360 in provincial income taxes, and a single mother with two kids, earning \$20,000 a year, will pay over \$700 a year in income taxes to the province.

Does the Treasurer understand that the token items of relief he provides every year are more of an insult than they are any sense of relief, and does he not think it is time he did something substantial about that?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I cannot respond in the affirmative to the honourable member's leading question, but I can be sure that he and others are aware that our tax reduction program costs approximately, as I recall, \$50 million and is directed towards the low-income groups. I also want to recall to his mind that we have quite a mature program of tax credits and rebates, which is about \$900 million, which is directed towards senior citizens and low-income people as well, dealing with rebates to assist them in the cost of housing and payment of their taxes, if they own their own property, and to some extent for sales tax payments, although that is not a large one, but it does amount to quite a large sum from the Treasury.

I would not try to convince the honourable member that I am satisfied—that is a ploy I have used on his gambit a number of times, and I do not know whether it will work any more—but year by year we have enriched the program that he is critical of. So I do not for a moment feel that his criticism is inappropriate but I do feel that the government has responded in an effective way.

Mr Laughren: The government has responded all right. Last year the income tax reduction plan that the Treasurer talks about, which he says cost the Treasury about \$50 million, as I recall it was closer to \$40 million, but I will not quibble with him on that. That is true; about \$40 million went to relieve the lowest-income taxpayers from paying income taxes in the province.

At the same time that the Treasurer provided \$40 million of relief to our lowest-income earners in the province, he provided relief of \$660 million to the wealthiest Ontario citizens because of a preferential treatment of the capital gains tax. Surely the

Treasurer sees that as a truly perverse tax system in the province of Ontario. How does he justify that?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I suppose we could have a game of, let's say, this amount is larger than that amount, because the honourable member will know also that in last year's budget we removed OHIP premiums, which was recommended by the Social Assistance Review Committee. This was a clear saving, largely directed to low-income people, of \$400 million.

As I say, in a \$44-billion budget—or \$42 billion or whatever the number is as we move towards this year's budget—there is a wide variety of programs directed towards assisting the less fortunate segment of the earning public and particularly those who are in receipt of social assistance. The rate of growth of these programs is very large indeed, and while the honourable member would feel they were insufficient, we feel they are appropriate and commendable for the economic circumstances we presently face.

Mr Laughren: It is truly strange that the tax system this Liberal government has now in the province of Ontario, after five years under this Treasurer, is more inequitable than it was under the previous government. That is very, very strange for a Liberal government in this province.

The Treasurer talks about OHIP premiums. He knows that most OHIP premiums were already paid by employers in the province of Ontario and that there already was a premium assistance program for low-income earners anyway, so he need not think that is a great gift.

The Treasurer should know as well, since he is going to be applying his tax on top of the federal goods and services tax—and that is going to be a windfall of about \$600 million to the Ontario Treasury—that therefore, surely to goodness, gives him room to lower the provincial sales tax from eight per cent to seven per cent without its doing much damage to the Ontario Treasury. We have laid before him alternative sources of revenue so that he can offset the damage done by the truly perverse GST at the federal level.

Could the Treasurer tell us why it is not a reasonable assumption that the Ontario sales tax will be reduced from eight per cent to seven per cent in the budget tomorrow?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am concerned that the honourable member persists in stating in this House and elsewhere that the GST implemented by the federal government next 1 January will provide a windfall to the provincial Treasury.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Of course it will.

Mr Pouliot: It will. Your tax comes after the federal tax; come on.

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am saying to you, Mr Speaker, and to anyone else who has the intelligence to listen, that that is not correct. I would be very glad to table this information, and as a matter of fact there is a chance that during a statement I hope to make to the House tomorrow the matter will be dealt with. But I can assure the members that the information the honourable member has put before them today is wrong and that is the reason why, although I would like to reduce the sales tax, it is not at the top of the matters that are having last-minute consideration.

1410

SEWAGE TREATMENT

Mr B. Rae: I have a question for the Premier. Last week the Treasurer made a speech to a dinner, at which the Premier

was present, in London. The Treasurer talked about the fact that the government was planning to establish a crown corporation which would assume responsibility for decisions on sewage and general development decisions on the creation of new sewage lines.

The Premier will know that last year there was a document prepared for several of his ministers, called Project X, which talked about the need for government to move more quickly, in tune with the interests of development and the need to take these development decisions away from the the Ministry of the Environment. I wonder if the Premier can tell us why this new crown corporation is not going to be reporting to the Minister of the Environment.

Hon Mr Peterson: With his usual paranoia, my friend is perverting the things that my colleague said in his announcement. One of the realities of this province, as my honourable friend knows, is there is incredible pressure for the basic environmental infrastructure, particularly water and sewers. He also knows that we have a relatively sophisticated infrastructure but some of that is in urgent need of repair. We have dramatically increased the budget for that in the last few years; the Treasurer will help me out with the numbers in a moment. But we also know that the pressures from the various communities are extremely large, so the intention that the Treasurer has in mind is to dramatically increase the amount of money available for the renewal of infrastructure. It just makes sense, so I remind my honourable friend not to get paranoid.

Mr B. Rae: I wonder if the Premier would mind answering my question. My psychological state notwithstanding, I would like to ask the Premier a simple question. This crown corporation is going to have clear responsibility for decision-making affecting the future growth of municipalities, the future use of agricultural land and the speed and pace of development in southern Ontario and in northern Ontario. I have a very simple question for the Premier; I have not heard an answer. I wonder if the Premier can tell us, why is this agency not being held responsible to the Ministry of the Environment?

Hon Mr Peterson: Municipalities have the essential responsibility. Municipalities want more money in the situation. We are trying to accommodate that. The Ministry of the Environment will keep the regulatory authority; There is no question about that. Frankly, we have the dilemma now that the Ministry of the Environment is both the regulator and the standards-keeper, if I may use that word, as well as the contractor in these situations. This is going to keep very tough controls in the hands of the Ministry of the Environment and, in addition, provide a lot more money in conjunction with the municipalities. It is a win-win situation. My honourable friend is getting excited about nothing.

Mr B. Rae: Why does the Premier not just fess up and admit that what he is doing is, in fact, caving in to the same lobby which produced Project X? He is caving in to precisely those same interests which have always had such an influence over his government and he is doing precisely what it is they want. They want private development to dictate the pace, the speed, where, when and how, and, in fact, he is taking the control in terms of the ministry away from the Ministry of the Environment. Why is the Premier giving it all over to the private sector, which is exactly what it wants?

Hon Mr Peterson: That is absolutely, factually incorrect. My friend asks me to fess up. Why does my friend not fess up and say that he has such a wizened-up little soul that he does

not like good news? He is not prepared to stand up and say this government is doing the right thing by assisting municipalities to rebuild their infrastructure. I think the problem is my friend opposite. He is only happy when there is bad news, and there is so much good news in this province, no wonder he is at a chronic low in terms of his miserable index.

Mrs Marland: My question is to the Minister of the Environment on the same subject. It really concerns the plan for this new agency that we understand is going to take away the minister's authority over municipal sewage and water treatment systems, in spite of what we just heard a couple of moments ago.

We were shocked last August when Project X was leaked and, in that document, we knew that the Treasurer wanted to transfer the authority for environmental assessment approvals to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and, obviously, take it away from the Minister of the Environment. We also understood, even if the government did not, that environmental consequences would have been disastrous.

Obviously we thought we had won the battle against Project X. Now we understand we are dealing with Project X, part 2. This time the Environment ministry would lose responsibility totally. Does the minister support transferring authority for water and sewage treatment systems to an agency such as the Ministry of Municipal Affairs?

Hon Mr Bradley: As the Premier has clearly indicated, the regulatory agency is the Ministry of the Environment. The Ministry of the Environment is the ministry which assesses all of the projects which come forward. As the member knows, if there is a water project or a sewer project which comes forward, it must be approved.

Mr Pouliot: Five years.

Hon Mr Bradley: There is a complaint from the member for Lake Nipigon that it takes a long time, and I recognize it does, because we have always wanted, and will continue to want, to make sure that whatever proposals are put forward have been examined very carefully as to their environmental implications. Exactly the same thing will happen in this case.

What is being proposed is an initiative which will provide thousands upon thousands more dollars available to municipalities that wish to upgrade their systems; that wish to improve their systems; that wish, when they want to bring on, for instance, affordable housing, to ensure that they have systems which are acceptable. The Ministry of the Environment will continue, as it has in the past, to comment on all of these subdivision plans which come forward, on all of the proposals which come forward for consideration under the Planning Act. The Ministry of the Environment proposes any changes that are necessary or can turn down any of the applications and will continue to do so.

Mrs Marland: We feel that this Minister of the Environment has no credibility left. First of all, his government wanted to chip away at its responsibilities for the protection of our lands; now it wants to reduce its authority over our waters. With no action on Bill 309, we have no commitment to our air. Obviously that has gone up in smoke. One is left wondering if we even have a Minister of the Environment in Ontario.

The minister was nowhere to be seen during the Hagersville tire fire. He was nowhere to be seen with the problem of the Elmira drinking water being contaminated and when the decisions were made on the Rouge. We are still concerned.

This minister seems to have no part in any major decisions to do with the environment—the Temagami and the greater Toronto area interim sites announcement etc. My question is, will the minister promise that the responsibilities for the water and sewage treatment systems, while remaining with his ministry, will have the same priority they had before the establishment of this alternative agency?

Hon Mr Bradley: That is exactly, of course, what the Premier has said and that is exactly what is going to happen, unlike the past. What is unfortunate is that there are so many people around here now who have a short memory of the past, who do not remember what things were like when that party was in power.

In those days, the priorities may have been far different, but I can assure members of the House that the priorities changed when the new government came into power, and exactly the factors which the member has repeated from our documents, which repeated what I have had to say—that is, environmental and health considerations—are paramount.

We have to put those into place or we are subject to prosecution under the various acts of the provincial government, so that is clearly where the priority has to be. Any municipality or provincial government, if it is operating a particular establishment, has to have its priority dealing with environmental and health considerations, and any other considerations come later.

I know that I get letters from many members on both sides of the House that say, "Would it not be nice if we were able to have some affordable housing?" and that is why we need—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mrs Marland: The people in this House who have short memories are in this government, and particularly this minister. He cannot even remember what he said when he was in opposition.

In any case, if it was not clear before, it certainly is clear now that this Liberal government is in the hip pocket of the development industry. We certainly understand why it is that this agency is being established. Why else would we have this kind of relationship between the Liberal Party and the development industry? Is it just a coincidence that this announcement is this week?

We also know that the Toronto Star usually has the ear of the Liberal government, and today when the Star reported this agency, it said that it would give priority to building new sewage systems rather than the remaining existing ones in the older areas—such as the riding of Mississauga South, I might add.

1420

The Speaker: And the question?

Mrs Marland: The minister knows that infrastructure renewal is as important as new capacity. That is why the beaches are closed every year: because his government has taken no action. What is the minister going to tell those municipalities that are desperately in need today of upgrades to sewage treatment plants that are polluting our waterways?

Hon Mr Bradley: I recognize very well that when the member's party left power, it left an awful lot of problems in Ontario. People who have been around this House and people who have been observers for some period of time remember well many of the historic problems around this province that we have had to clean up and continue to clean up. As has been the

case in the past, and will continue to be in the future, we will address those problems. We will assess them first of all and then address them with the necessary funding in every case.

The members of the opposition, depending on whom they are talking to—it depends on whether they are talking to one side or the other side—have a different story to say. They will say: "This government takes so long to assess things. The Ministry of the Environment takes too long." We will continue to take whatever period of time it requires to ensure that all of the environmental implications of any proposals are assessed very carefully. In fact, there will continue to be the kind of strict restrictions on development that have been there before when that development is not conducive to the best interests of the environment in Ontario. For the member to make any other suggestions is certainly questionable at best.

CARDIOVASCULAR CARE

Mr Eves: I have a question of the Minister of Health. On 12 April I asked her this question, to which I did not receive a specific answer, and last Wednesday 18 April I asked the same question of the Premier, who informed me that he would make her cognizant of the question.

As the minister is well aware, Dr Salerno did an external review of cardiac services at the Hospital for Sick Children. The hospital, as a result of his review, made a request to her ministry very specifically and directly for funding with respect to the shortage of critical care nurses at the hospital. Will the minister, now that she has had at least two weeks to prepare an answer, give us her response to that request?

Hon Mrs Caplan: The member opposite should know that the Hospital for Sick Children requested Dr Salerno to come in to review its situation. He forwarded his report to the hospital on 2 April. The member should also know that I met with the board chairman and several members of the board. I want him to know that we are working very closely with the Hospital for Sick Children and other hospitals around the province to address the needs of Ontario residents.

Mr Eves: Are we going to get an answer to this specific question or not? On 12 April the minister started telling me, "The cardiovascular services available at the children's hospital in western Ontario in London and the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa with the Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto, I think, will improve that situation."

I talked to both Dr Williams, who is a cardiac surgeon at the Hospital for Sick Children, and Dr Salerno, who did the report, last week. They both told me the same thing. The minister does not know what she is talking about if she thinks that those two hospitals can do complex cardiovascular surgery on children. That is the issue we are talking about here, not all those other issues she likes to throw into the pot when she cannot give us a specific answer. This hospital made a very specific request, for \$8 million for intensive care unit nurses at the Hospital for Sick Children. They want an answer now. What is the answer, yes or no?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I think the member opposite should know that as part of Dr Salerno's report there was no request for money. In fact, we are working with the Hospital for Sick Children to ensure that we establish the kind of paediatric cardiac referral system which is appropriate. Half of the children referred to the Hospital for Sick Children come from outside the Metropolitan Toronto area. We know as well that the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa and the hospital in London offer very important services.

Yes, the Hospital for Sick Children offers some very unique and special services in the province. I want to assure the member that we are working very closely with them to meet the needs of the people of Ontario.

Mr Eves: That is all very enlightening. We already knew all that stuff; I would have presumed the Minister of Health already knew it.

The surgeons at the hospital say that the average waiting time per child now for cardiac surgery is 15 weeks. They say that a medically acceptable period of time is six to eight weeks. They find this totally unacceptable. The Hospital for Sick Children is the only place in Canada that can do this specific type of surgery. Is the minister going to give them the specific funding they request to specifically address this specific problem? She should not give me all that general BS stuff. She should answer the question.

The Speaker: Order. Did the minister hear the unusual language of the member in the question? Thank you.

Hon Mrs Caplan: Perhaps a quote from Dr Salerno himself will put the member's mind at ease. Dr Salerno said very clearly: "Co-ordination is very important. In the past there was disorganization. Now there are committees organized, working groups, experts. Cardiac surgeons in the province are getting together." Dr Salerno has said: "We have our act together. We are putting our act together and, without co-ordination, there is disorganization."

He went on to say—and this is Dr Salerno—"And I think that what has happened in the last year or so, and I have been a part of all of this, demonstrates to me that there is a great commitment for the ministry, the hospital and cardiac surgeons to solve this problem." We are doing that. We are working co-operatively one with the other, and I want to assure the member opposite that in fact he can have confidence that here in Ontario, people will have the services that they need when they need them.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. If you wish to waste the time of other members—order.

EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Morin-Strom: I have a question for the Minister of Health as well, with regard to a statement she made to the Legislature last 22 June, some 10 months ago.

At that time, the minister announced an \$18-million, province-wide program to enhance the quality of emergency health services which was to include "the setting up of new regional trauma networks." Since that time, we have seen nothing from this announcement and, in particular, for residents of northern Ontario. What we have heard instead are announcements from, for example, Victoria Hospital, of its decision to cease providing a medical escort team for the transport of critically ill patients by air because these activities have been unfunded by the ministry.

Can this minister tell us when we are going to see these regional trauma and emergency services networks in northern Ontario? What is the status of her program? Why has she not done anything in 10 months?

Hon Mrs Caplan: The member is wrong. In fact, we have been implementing exactly what I announced last June. I announced that there would be \$9 million for additional services, for ambulances, in some 26 communities across the province

and that the additional \$9 million would be used to implement guidelines to help hospitals improve efficiency of their emergency wards. We designated seven new trauma networks. We established critical care hotline implementation right across this province. I can tell him that we have already got the one in Hamilton up and running. We have a model which I know the other parts of the province are emulating at this very time. We are implementing the program that was announced.

Mr Morin-Strom: Well, it is nice to hear that the minister has broadened her horizon from Toronto to Hamilton, at least. I wish this minister would look at the rest of the province for a change and look at the fact that in northern Ontario the services are not being improved. They have been cut back drastically.

She has been informed earlier this year by representatives of the hospitals in Sault Ste Marie and the Group Health Centre in Sault Ste Marie of the severe impact that is potentially there from this cutback of services that had been provided by Victoria Hospital. There is no replacement, to this point, for the Sudbury General Hospital, which was her alternative for a regional centre in the north.

When in fact are we going to see some action on this item so that emergency health care services are provided to northern communities on the same kind of basis as they are provided here in the city of Toronto?

1430

Hon Mrs Caplan: Northern health issues present a very special challenge for the people of the province of Ontario, particularly because of geography and, often, remoteness. I can say to the member that Victoria Hospital in London is not the referral centre. I know that they accept some patients from the north, and I know as well that the hospitals in the north are looking at making sure that they have the transfer teams available.

We are always reviewing this important situation to make sure that the people of northern Ontario have access to the services they need and that we put in place the kind of network that will respond appropriately. In fact, we have designated Sudbury General Hospital, as well as Kingston General Hospital, Ottawa General Hospital, Hamilton General Hospital, McKellar General Hospital in Thunder Bay, Hotel Dieu of St Joseph Hospital in Windsor and Victoria Hospital in London as the bases for the trauma networks that will be established.

I can say to the member that it is not going to be implemented as quickly as anyone would like, including myself, but implementation is proceeding and I am quite pleased with the way it is going forward.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr Villeneuve: My question is to the Minister of Northern Development; it has to do with the memo that his deputy minister sent to the cabinet secretary. Does the minister agree that things in the north, economically speaking, are in very bad shape these days?

Hon Mr Fontaine: In response to the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, if there is a problem in the north today it is not due to this government. It is due to the 15 per cent and the dollar that was implemented by Mr Mulroney. The problem in the north is in the lumbering industry and the problem does not come from this province; it comes from Ottawa. That is the problem.

Mr Villeneuve: I will try again. Northern Ontario is still very much part of Ontario, as is eastern Ontario, and both those

areas are having some problems. Mr Smith, in his letter to the cabinet secretary, mentioned that Dofasco has closed down a mine in Temagami and in Kirkland Lake. Virginiatown lost its major employer, a gold mine. Hearst, a town the minister knows very well, has major problems with the lumber industry—Wawa, Sudbury, Marathon; we could go on.

I want a definite answer from this minister. What is the plan by this government to assist these northern communities that are in deep trouble right now?

Hon Mr Fontaine: First of all, I would like to remind my honourable friend that two years ago this government put in place the northern Ontario heritage fund with a commitment of over \$37 million to new industry, which created close to 2,500 jobs in the last year and a half.

Second, we are working with the municipalities. We introduced a new program—it is called the municipal incentive development program—to help the municipalities form an economic commission or development board. Today there are 27 towns in the north where there are grants from that, \$500,000 per town for over five years. Those towns are working together to try to diversify the economy.

I can go on. In the Timiskaming area, there is a whole list of initiatives that we did with the municipalities. First of all, we got them working together, which they never did before. Second, there is new industry, such as Pyrok and Mirolin and others that are interested in establishing themselves in that area.

When Dofasco left, it left a fund of \$4 million that will be administered by the heritage fund board. They have their own board, but we are administering the money. On top of that, there are about four new mines that were opened in the last year and a half. People forget that it is not only the heritage board that puts—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Thank you..

Mr Kanter: I have a question for the Minister of Government Services. Just prior to Earth Day, I met with a representative of a company that sells—

[Interruption]

The Speaker: Order. I have no choice. We will recess.

The House recessed at 1435.

1439

RECYCLING

Mr Kanter: First of all, I want to make it absolutely clear that I had no knowledge of or connection with that demonstration. However, my question to the Minister of Government Services does relate to paper, to paper that is recycled and unbleached.

I met recently with a representative of a company that sells 100 per cent recycled and unbleached paper. I understand that producing this type of product saves trees. Every tonne of 100 per cent recycled paper saves up to 17 trees compared to the production of virgin paper. It results in less air and water pollution and reduces the need for space in landfill sites. Could the minister indicate to the House whether his ministry is taking any action to introduce the use of recycled paper within government ministries?

Hon Mr Ward: I would like to respond to the member and his supporters. I do take to heart his assurances that it was only coincidental that the House was interrupted at the point of this question but, as the member knows full well, the government of

Ontario is a very significant supplier of goods and services across the government, representing some \$2 billion annually in purchases of both goods and services. When this is applied to the broader public sector, the total balloons to somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$27 billion to \$28 billion.

The member will know that we are proceeding on two fronts. First of all, last year we embarked on a major internal government recycling program. Subsequent to that we will be proceeding with some very significant changes in the way we purchase products. Although purchasing is very much decentralized across the government, we are taking steps to bring a much more co-ordinated approach to this. In the very near future my ministry will be offering to all government agencies a line of environmentally sensitive products, including recycled paper, envelopes, packaging, supplies and toner cartridges and will be expanding this further to other products over the course of time.

Mr Kanter: I am pleased to hear about initiatives with respect to the use of recycled paper. I wonder if the minister could also speak about other initiatives to ensure that the amount of paper in government offices is reduced or reused.

Hon Mr Ward: The member will know that about eight or nine months ago we introduced a recycling program in all of our Toronto-based offices. That will be fully implemented by the end of April. The response to that initiative has been overwhelming and we expect to expand it outside Toronto to other centres throughout Ontario. The impacts, we believe, will be very significant. But I want to assure the member that it does not just stop at paper products. Even in the letting of service contracts such as demolition permits, a lot of which is going on in Toronto right now as some of the older buildings are taken down, we are writing into those contracts a requirement that onsite recycling must take place. This will be a major component of any contracts that are let for those services.

In addition, the member will know that used furniture, for instance, is made available to non-profit agencies through the government warehousing facilities. This too is an effort not only to recycle but to reuse materials that are currently used by the government.

NORTHERN TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

Mr Pouliot: My question is to the Minister of Health. Earlier this month I received information from physicians in northwestern Ontario and from the Thunder Bay branch of the Canadian Cancer Society that patients originating from Toronto for chemotherapy and being transported to Thunder Bay were getting their full transportation costs and other expenses—the cost of an escort, for example—yet when the people of northwestern Ontario, the people of Thunder Bay, come to Toronto seeking specialist medical treatment they can only be accompanied by an escort if they happen to be less than 18 years of age. Furthermore, they only get a maximum of \$250. How can the minister explain and indeed justify this double standard?

Hon Mrs Caplan: As to the information the member has regarding referral, I think it is extremely important that people have the facts. When northern Ontario residents travel to have access to services, they are eligible for the northern travel assistance grant, which is extremely valuable in ensuring that people of northern Ontario have access to the services they need. During a short period of time when we were experiencing pressures in downtown Toronto, we established the co-ordinating opportunity for people who required services outside

Metropolitan Toronto. We worked with the Canadian Cancer Society to make sure that no one was denied access to care because they could not afford to travel. I can tell him that that program has been very successful.

Mr Hampton: The minister talks about facts. I want to recite to her facts that came from a physician's letter in northwestern Ontario. This is confirmed by the Thunder Bay branch of the Canadian Cancer Society. People from southern Ontario going to Thunder Bay were given the full cost of air fare for themselves, full cost of air fare for an escort, full cost of hotel accommodation for themselves and escort, and full cost of food for themselves and escort. Her ministry also tried to get the cancer society to provide escorts while they were in Thunder Bay, and she was going to pay for that.

Someone who travels from northern Ontario to southern Ontario for treatment gets a \$250 travel grant. If you go from Dryden to Toronto and back by bus it costs you \$240, from Fort Frances to Toronto and back \$236. How does the minister justify that? People from the north take the bus and she flies people up with their escorts, everything paid. Twenty-six hours by bus—

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mrs Caplan: I think it is extremely important for the member opposite to acknowledge the importance of the northern travel grant program and the benefit that has offered to people of northern Ontario to ensure that they have access to the services they need. I do not believe for one moment that he would assume that is at all comparable with somebody in a short-term situation who was referred closer to home in downtown Toronto and who found that he had to access services.

I can tell him that the challenges of meeting the needs of the north, I think, are significant and we are moving forward on that. The travel grant program is very important, but the Canadian Cancer Society has been working very closely with those people who because of the stresses in downtown Toronto require access to—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Read standing order 20(b) some time.

Mr Sterling: I will read it, Mr Speaker. I cannot assure you that the rest will read it, but I will read 20(b).

TOY-LENDING LIBRARIES

Mr Sterling: I have a question of the Minister of Community and Social Services. I have heard the minister stand on his feet in this House a number of times over the past few weeks complaining about the federal government cutting back on its funding to him. Can he tell me why his ministry is now funding toy-lending libraries across this province if in fact it is so short on money?

Hon Mr Beer: I think that this and many other initiatives speak to the fact that we are trying to use the dollars we have as effectively as we can. We recognize as part of our initiatives under child care that the toy-lending libraries are an important part of that and we continue to do it in terms of that program area. The fact remains that the limit on the Canada assistance plan for this fiscal year and for next year, cut to five per cent, will have a very direct impact on our programs overall. That does not mean we start cutting every single program we have, but that total amount of money, some \$160 million, will cause an impact on our programs.

Mr Sterling: I am going to do something today that I have not done in the 13 years I have been in this Legislature. I am going to ask the minister to take away from my own riding \$185,000 that he gave to some people in my riding to set up a toy-lending library. He is going to buy \$8,500 worth of toys, he is going to pay for a big van and he is going to pay for people to truck these toys around a rural municipality, which quite frankly is rich and wealthy enough to buy its own toys in general.

The minister should quit complaining about what he is getting from the federal department and start putting his own house in order. What is he going to do about cutting off this kind of foolish spending of taxpayers' dollars?

1450

Hon Mr Beer: I think the honourable member is quite simply wrong. There are many, many initiatives that are undertaken by the Ministry of Community and Social Services—all, frankly, that are worth while—that are intended to help people in various parts of the province. The toy-lending library program, as part of a comprehensive approach to child care, becomes very important, especially in areas that are rural and spread out. We also respond in the way we have to the program in the member's own area because that request came from that area and because people said this would be important to them.

If the honourable member is saying that we should get up and cancel all the various lending programs that we have under the child care program, I would be happy to get up and say: "This is what he wants, but we're not going to do it, because those are important. They are effective in helping young children in homes which might not otherwise have this kind of support."

I think that the honourable member needs to understand that we continue to fund our programs. We simply ask that the federal government live up its part of the bargain under the Canada assistance plan.

WATER QUALITY

Mr Tatham: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. The International Joint Commission, in part II of its fifth biennial report on Great Lakes water quality, released 11 April 1990, states that the health of our children is threatened as a result of our exposure to low levels of persistent toxic substances. One of the recommendations is to incorporate the principle of reverse onus into regulatory policies and programs. I believe it is incumbent on industry to prove that it is not polluting our environment. Let us make the off button before we make the on button. Would the minister not agree?

Hon Mr Bradley: I always agree with the member for Oxford when he puts forward questions of this kind and propositions which are eminently reasonable. I want to tell the member that is exactly the direction of our various programs and actions in the province.

The member may be aware that under our new water pollution regulation which is being developed at this time there is a requirement on all of the industries in Ontario in the program to monitor, under the supervision of the Ministry of the Environment—and monitor, by the way, at their own cost and to their own inconvenience—with split samples being provided to the Ministry of the Environment of all of the substances, not the lumps and colours the way it used to be, but all of those potential substances that they may be putting into waterways.

In the abatement regulation, they will be compelled to drastically reduce and eventually eliminate the discharges that

would be going to any of our waterways in the province. They must also utilize the best management practices, which in many cases in the past were not utilized and must be now put into effect. The onus is on them then to prevent spills and to clean up.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon Mr Bradley: The industry has seen the writing on the wall and we are seeing industries such as Dow and Dupont both going to closed-loop systems at the present—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Tatham: In the same report, in order to raise the level of knowledge among the general public about the importance of a clean environment and what individuals can do to prevent, avoid and remediate degradation of the aquasystem, the IJC again recommended that parties prepare and urge the use of a comprehensive public information education program. What is Ontario doing to achieve this?

Hon Mr Bradley: As the member may be aware, we in Ontario establish remedial action plans to solve those historic problems that he is talking about that occurred in the days when we did not have the kind of environmental regulations and controls that are existing at the present time and will exist in the future. The remedial action plans are being funded by the Ministry of the Environment and they allow for the kind of public input that the member has talked about.

We also have the MISA Advisory Committee, which has on its membership a number of eminent scientists and environmentalists who in the past have been critical of government practices and are ensuring that the program that we implement in Ontario is one that is sensitive to all of the environmental issues.

I also meet on frequent occasions with members of various environment groups who provide advice and counsel which we incorporate into our programs, and of course we will continue our educational programs through the Ministry of Education, along with those in the federal jurisdiction, to ensure that people are, first of all, knowledgeable of what is happening in Ontario, and second, that the programs are being put into effect to abate and—

The Speaker: Thank you.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Allen: I have a question for the Treasurer. The standing committee on social development, which heard in very moving terms the representations of the food bank people in the month of March, has tabled its report, recommending that, starting this year, the government proceed with a four-year strategy to address the tremendous burden that those agencies are carrying. They write specifically:

“The adverse impact of low income and the resulting use of food banks is now so demonstrably severe, especially for children, and so manifestly costly in health, education and correction budgets for government and society at large, that the government should implement income adequacy, both in social assistance and minimum wage legislation.”

Is the Treasurer prepared to move on those particulars and that strategy in his upcoming budget?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I suppose the answer would be “in part,” but since the budget will be read tomorrow, the honourable member will make his own judgement. I have a feeling that, while I am enthusiastic about it, he probably will be less en-

thusiastic, because it is very difficult to achieve a level that is as satisfactory as we would hope it might be.

The inauguration of the response to the Social Assistance Review Committee last year is really just now being felt. While there was a commitment of \$415 million, it was phased in over the year and is really just now fully operational and the full impact of that at the \$415-million level will be really just felt this year and, to some extent, more effectively next year.

Without talking about the details in the budget, I think the honourable member is aware, as I am, that the number of clients and people requiring family benefits and general welfare assistance seems to be mounting in a way that would give us pause, to say the least, and that our requirements in this connection will mean there is a substantial, increasing outlay month by month. So in that response there will be a lot more dollars available in the community, and I have a feeling that the member will have a supplementary which will permit both of us to continue the exchange.

Mr Allen: We do look forward to tomorrow's budget with hope.

I have in one hand a list of persons compiled by the emergency service providers in Ottawa, who indicate that, notwithstanding the benefits that the people listed here got from the SARC, there are still many examples who run from 44 to 58 per cent below the poverty line. On the other hand, I have in my hand a chart which shows fairly graphically the relationship of wealth in various groups in this country. The Treasurer will know that roughly 20 per cent of the population in fact owns 70 per cent of the country's wealth in real estate, stocks, bonds and bank accounts.

Given the fact that these same people are those who will benefit most from the federal goods and services tax, is it not possible that perhaps the Treasurer might find this an appropriate year to introduce a wealth tax at last in Ontario in order to gear himself up for the strategy that the committee has proposed for him?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am not going to let out the secrets of the budget by saying there will or will not be a wealth tax, but the honourable member might make a sensible projection on his own.

I would also like to say that it is probably not worth spending the valuable time of the honourable member in the House in drawing this to his attention, but he is aware that the federal government has placed a five per cent ceiling on the growth of social programs that are shared 50-50 by the government of Canada. This is really the only province that has exceeded that five per cent growth rate in the past, and there would be every expectation that we might exceed it, in part at least, this year. As a matter of fact, the rate of growth last year was 19 per cent, and it may have led the federal government to realize that it did not want to continue on a 50-50 basis, but I can assure the member the withdrawal of that historic sharing of the costs of expanding and emerging social programs has had a tremendous impact on our budgetary requirements. It really means that even to keep anywhere near the rate of progress that we had envisaged, we are spending double the amount of money to achieve what the honourable member would describe as somewhat limited goals.

1500

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mrs Marland: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. I know the minister is well aware of the Queen Elizabeth

Way where it interchanges with Dixie Road. The Queen Elizabeth Way, being one of the oldest highways in Ontario, if not the oldest, also has in the interchange with Dixie Road one of the oldest-fashioned designs for an interchange. That interchange has been a dangerous design for some time because of the increased volumes of traffic. The ministry has been working to redesign that interchange for some 15 years, and I received a letter from the minister in February of this year where he said that he regrets he is still unable "to commit funds and staff resources for this project at this time." I ask the minister how much longer the people in that community have to live with the increased volumes of traffic in an unsafe interchange.

Hon Mr Wrye: The honourable member would know that there are extremely large pressures upon us in terms of the various roads and provincial highways in Ontario. I have indicated to her in the letter, a section of which she read, that in the next very short while we are unable to support the reconstruction of that interchange as an immediate priority. That does not mean that as additional money becomes available, we will not be able to move that project forward.

The honourable member may want to know that while we spent some \$325 million on our provincial highways program in the fiscal year just ended, this year our provincial spending on highways will go from that level to \$425 million and next year our spending will go to \$550 million. All of that kind of money is unprecedented in the history of this province.

Mrs Marland: That answer is totally unsatisfactory. Those people who live in the greater Toronto area are paying more for everything, including the privilege of driving motor vehicles and having a driver's licence, and they are told it is because there is going to be money spent on the infrastructure and improvements to the highway system within the GTA. Those people are telling the minister today, through my question, that it is not satisfactory simply to say that there are other, higher priorities, because it seems to those people that the priorities keep getting juggled around depending on who is the loudest wheel and where the minister decides for his own purposes the priority lies.

I ask the minister again, how many more years is this community going to have to wait for correction of the unsafe interchange of Dixie Road and the Queen Elizabeth Way?

Hon Mr Wrye: One of the things that never cease to amaze me about that party opposite is how it changes from day to day. Tomorrow I suppose it will be their "cut government spending" day. Today, of course, they have been in full flight in terms of additional government spending.

The honourable member may want to know that within the GTA we have two projects now under way. One is Highway 407, which is a \$1-billion project. The other is the easterly extension to 12 lanes of Highway 401; that is a \$250-million project, and it is going forward even now. So when the honourable member talks about projects not going forward within the GTA with the kind of funding that residents of this area are putting in, she is absolutely incorrect. We obviously have to take priority decisions, but I would say to her and to other members of the House that we are working very aggressively, in terms of both road transportation and public transportation, to make the GTA the very best possible place to live.

DECENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Mr M. C. Ray: I have a question for the Premier. It concerns the deficiency of Ontario government jobs in the city of

Windsor. The Premier has on a number of occasions indicated that the relocation of government jobs to our city is under review by the government. The Premier is also aware of the deficiency and the unfair distribution of government jobs in this province, such that our city has disproportionately fewer than many other cities. When are we going to see some action on this matter and when are we going to see the relocation of a substantial number of government jobs to our city?

Hon Mr Peterson: I know the honourable member has taken up this cause with great vigour, and I say to my honourable friend, as he is aware, it is a policy of this government to decentralize government operations. That has to be done, as I say, in a practical context of when leases come due and other matters. We do think it is an effective policy, and the decentralization that has been undertaken, I think, is working out very well by and large. My honourable friend will be aware that it is highly disruptive for some who are part of the public service and we must be as sensitive as we can to accommodate their needs and wishes.

That being said, we are mindful of the fact that Windsor is a unique community, and one can make the case that it has fewer provincial government jobs per capita than other communities. We try to be sensitive to the needs of Windsor, as my honourable friend knows, with the Cleary Auditorium, with the riverfront environmental proposal and other things, but I am not in a position to answer my honourable friend's question specifically today because these matters are always under review.

MOTION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Mr Ward moved that, notwithstanding any previous order of the House, the order of precedence for private members' business be amended by substituting Ms Oddie Munro's name for Mr Pope's name for ballot item 48 and by deleting ballot item 57; and that, notwithstanding standing order 94(h), the requirement for notice be waived with respect to ballot item 48.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES

Mr Polsinelli: I have a petition signed by 36 constituents of the riding of Yorkview addressed to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It is asking that the Legislature repeal the French Language Services Act. In accordance with the standing orders, I have subscribed my name thereto.

SOCIAL SERVICE GRADUATES

Mr Kormos: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Ministry of Community and Social Services is currently reviewing the regulations of social work practices in Ontario; and

"Whereas clear evidence of need for such regulations or legislation has been presented; and

"Whereas the potential danger to the clients served in the social service sector of the legislation as proposed far outweighs the prospective advantages of proposed legislation,

"Therefore, be it resolved that social service worker program students of Niagara College and others are in favour of legislation regulating social service practitioners and believe

further and more widespread consultation should continue so that legislation could be drafted which would include community college graduates as well as university graduates in the social work field."

There are 150 signatures attached to that petition and my name as well. Of course, it has my sincere and strong support.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr D. S. Cooke: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, hereby register our concern and protest over the exclusion of permanent mental disorders in the threshold definition of the Ontario motorist protection plan.

"We respectfully request that the Legislature consider amendment of the proposed threshold definition to recognize the potential for permanent mental disorders resulting from a traumatic event such as an auto accident. To omit mental illness from the definition is discriminatory and implies that the resulting damages are neither substantive nor acceptable."

I have signed the petition.

ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

Mrs E. J. Smith: I wish to present a petition on behalf of David Herbert and his associates which contains roughly 824 signatures. The subject of the petition is the request that equal time should be given in presenting the underlying assumptions of both evolution, as a theory, and creationism. I have signed this petition, although I do not necessarily agree with it.

1510

REPORT BY COMMITTEE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mrs O'Neill from the standing committee on social development presented the committee's report and moved the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker: Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mrs O'Neill: This opportunity that my committee had to study the very current and poignant issue of food banks gave us a platform for very meaningful discussions. We met with users, providers, religious groups and researchers. The researchers and their findings were particularly important to us because we have discovered that over 50 per cent of the people using food banks are children.

We feel that there are many ministries that should and will take note of our findings, and there should be bridges between these ministries. The Ministry of Community and Social Services, of course, comes to mind first, and the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education. We are asking for changes to the Education Act so that school boards can get more involved in this critical community problem.

This then is the business of government, the food bank situation, because we see that the food banks are really only a pointer to a much more serious problem, a problem that involves income and shelter. Shelter costs certainly confine people's choices in our communities across the province.

We have made 10 recommendations and, as I have said, they are directed at the ministries of our government. We hope the goals that will be achieved are economic independence and a continuation of the implementation of the social reforms that

have been begun by our government and that the task force on food banks will be given a much higher profile and will report regularly to this Legislature.

I thank the members of my committee, and all those who appeared before it, for studying what I consider is an issue that demands recognition.

On motion by Mrs O'Neill, the debate was adjourned.

Interjection.

The Speaker: She did a little earlier, and I gave her a chance to add some further comments.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on government notice of motion 30 on time allocation in relation to Bill 68, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance.

Mr Kormos: I have got to tell you, Mr Speaker, I thought we would never get to this this afternoon. There was so much going on here today. But I am glad we finally have because time is fleeting and we have got to get down to the matter at hand. These are precious moments that we are able to spend together talking about this particularly bad motion brought by the Liberals. We have got to remember that we New Democrats would dearly love to debate Bill 68. The whole purpose of this assembly, it seems to us in the New Democratic Party, is to debate and analyse legislation before you call upon members to vote on it.

Among other things, why we would like to debate it is not just because it is such a thoroughly bad law but because there have been so many misimpressions left across the province by Liberal spokespeople who will not participate in a debate, who will not participate in an exchange and dialogue, who are afraid of the challenges that would be brought to them.

Just the other day, the Rotary Club down in Port Colborne had the member for Durham Centre come down and make a speech. Well, the Liberal member for Durham Centre went down there. He would not dare say in his home town what he told those good people down in Port Colborne. The Liberal member for Durham Centre, whose wife calls him Allan Furlong, said some just incredible things down there in Port Colborne about the government's auto insurance scheme. Then I realized that it was not really a speech. People walked out of that meeting scratching their heads, asking, "Can we rely on what this member of the Liberal Party just told us?"

I recognized it, when I read the newspaper excerpt, as simply a rehashing of the same old line that the government has contained in its written propaganda. I am going to talk about those misimpressions, because we talked the other day about the misimpressions of the member for Mississauga West that were being created in his householder.

I am going to get back to that. I like bookstores. I enjoy bookstores. We have got some really fine bookstores down in Welland: Sue Berg, The Book Exchange, down on King Street is a great place to find reading material at great prices. Marj McPherson, similarly on King Street, with For the Love of Books, has always got the newest bestsellers. Toronto, of course—I am so lucky to be able to represent the people of Welland-Thorold because it enables me to go to bookstores here in Toronto. Among them, one of the nicest and most interesting ones is one called This Ain't the Rosedale Library. They stock a really good selection of interesting books.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: We are getting indeed to the point in this time allocation motion discussion. But I was in there the other day and I saw a book that I picked up, as a matter of fact, at the Winnipeg Airport coming back from our federal convention at the end of last year. I picked it up and read it on the plane coming back. It was just a fascinating book. I saw it over at This Ain't the Rosedale Library on Church Street the other day.

I reflected on it. It is called *One Hundred Monkeys: The Triumph of Popular Wisdom in Canadian Politics*, by Robert Mason Lee. What a delightful, fascinating bit of reading material. What was remarkable in itself is the title, *One Hundred Monkeys*. I immediately thought of the Liberal caucus. I appreciate their numbers are not 100; their numbers are but 94.

I then reflected on the fact that a whole bunch of Liberals are going to be looking at retirement plans because of their persistence in supporting, first, this time allocation motion and, second, Bill 68. I thought, well, 100 monkeys; really, all it needs is for 29 Liberals to stand up and be counted. All it needs is for 29 Liberals to vote against this time allocation motion and it can be defeated. All it needs is 29 Liberals to vote against Bill 68 and Bill 68 will be defeated, as it should be and as the people of Ontario want it to be defeated and, to boot, those same 29 Liberal backbenchers who have the courage to vote against it are going to get re-elected as compared to being defeated.

As I say, I already have a copy of this book, but I picked it up again when I was in This Ain't the Rosedale Library over on Church Street because, as I say, the title reminded me of the Liberal caucus, and I reflected on the fact that people across Ontario have been paying incredible attention to this discussion about the jackboot tactics of the Liberals. They have been watching them day in and day out.

1520

I was up in North Bay on Friday night speaking to a group of people there about this bad legislation, the auto insurance bill, and people were stopping me in McDonald's, where I was having a hamburger on my way to the meeting, and saying, "Keep fighting that time allocation motion, because we here in North Bay, just like the people from everywhere else in Ontario, sure as heck don't appreciate what the Liberals are doing when they are trying to guillotine, when they are trying to muzzle the opposition."

Enough of North Bay. Once again, the book *One Hundred Monkeys* is an excellent bit of reading material. The fact that people across Ontario are watching what is going on and the fact that they have been calling in—you know that, Mr Speaker. They have been phoning in every day. All day Friday they were calling in.

Gerry Clancy from Scarborough called in and he supports our opposition to the time allocation motion and to Bill 68. The comments of Gerry Clancy from Scarborough are appreciated.

M. Novar from Georgetown called in. M. Novar supports our opposition to the time allocation motion and M. Novar supports our opposition to Bill 68.

Clarence Cox from East Francis Street in Thunder Bay called in to say that he supports our opposition to Bill 68 and to the time allocation motion.

Mr D. W. Smith: What number did he call?

Mr Kormos: He called me at my number, 965-7714, right here at Queen's Park. We will accept collect phone calls at

965-7714, area code 416. There are a whole bunch more people who were calling all day Friday and started calling again as soon as the staff got in. People have been talking about this in their living rooms and recreation rooms all weekend.

As I say, the book *One Hundred Monkeys* is such great reading, such a good analysis of politics in Canada in the 1980s as we embark on the 1990s. We only need 29 Liberals to vote against this crummy bill to get it defeated. People have been paying so much attention that what I am going to do is: The 29th person who calls my office at Queen's Park this afternoon and mentions the book *One Hundred Monkeys* is going to get this copy of this book sent to him in the mail today.

One Hundred Monkeys reminds me of the Liberal ranks here at Queen's Park. The 29th person who calls means that there have to be 29 Liberals who oppose this legislation. What they have to do is call me at 965-7714 and they have to name the book. The 29th person who calls this afternoon and says the title of the book *One Hundred Monkeys* is going to get a copy of *One Hundred Monkeys: The Triumph of Popular Wisdom in Canadian Politics*.

It is a great book and great reading. I wish I could give more away, but I simply cannot afford to. The 29th caller who mentions *One Hundred Monkeys* is going to get a free copy of *One Hundred Monkeys*. Call me at 965-7714.

Miss Martel: Are you going to autograph it?

Mr Kormos: As a matter of fact, I am going to autograph it and I think as many members of the New Democratic Party caucus who can manage to get to it are going to autograph it as well.

As a matter of fact, any Liberals who want to can similarly autograph it, but all I want is the Liberals who are not going to vote for Bill 68 or are going to vote against it. I want the Liberals who are going to get re-elected to put their autograph in here, and those are the Liberals who are going to oppose Bill 68. Those are the Liberals who are going to support their ridings and their constituents, not the big insurance industries here in Canada.

The 29th phone call at 965-7714, and *One Hundred Monkeys* is yours. It is our way of saying thank you to people in Ontario for their close attention to this debate and their concern about the abandonment of democracy by the Liberals.

Howard Moscoe, Metropolitan Toronto councillor, sent me this note. He was at the 10th anniversary banquet of the Chinese Canadian National Council. That is a group that was formed some 10 years ago by the Chinese-Canadian community to fight for civil liberties.

Again, I am not comparing even auto insurance to the struggles that that community and that organization have engaged in, but there is something appropriate about Howard Moscoe, a Metropolitan Toronto councillor, having been there and having passed this message on to me on the back of his invitation to that dinner. He writes, "Dear Peter, all my constituents in North York-Spadina are cheering you on."

Mr J. B. Nixon: How come you weren't there? There was no provincial NDP present. It was embarrassing.

Mr Philip: I was there. What are you talking about? I spoke.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: Again, it is because of that cheering on that we can carry on with this debate. That is why those phone calls to 965-7714 are so important to me and to democracy in this province.

Mr J. B. Nixon: I didn't see you there.

Mr Philip: You weren't there.

Mr J. B. Nixon: I was there; you weren't.

Mr Philip: I sure was.

Mr J. B. Nixon: I didn't see you there, Ed. You were on vacation. I know it.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please, the member for York Mills, the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale.

Mr Philip: The member for York Mills is telling lies in the House.

Mr J. B. Nixon: Telling lies? Compared to what we are hearing from the speaker—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member for Etobicoke-Rexdale has mentioned that a member is lying in the House. I would ask the member to withdraw that, please.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Philip: I withdraw the remark, but the member was misleading the House.

The Deputy Speaker: That is not acceptable. I am sorry.

Mr Philip: I will withdraw it, to be acceptable to you, sir.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Kormos: I understand, Mr Speaker. It is difficult when you have got 94 monkeys here and you have to—

The Deputy Speaker: I still do not really believe that referring to honourable members as monkeys is correct and parliamentary.

Mr Kormos: My apologies.

The Deputy Speaker: And you will watch your parliamentary language. Thank you.

Mr Kormos: I appreciate the guidance that you give me in this regard, because oftentimes, as you know, Mr Speaker, we are involved in a debate wherein emotions flare. We are involved in a discussion wherein the stakes are really high. For the insurance industry, we are talking about a payday of almost \$1 billion in the first year alone. Those are big stakes.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: For the drivers and taxpayers and the innocent injured victims from whom this billion bucks is going to be obtained they are big stakes too. Howard Moscoe, Metro councillor, writes, "Dear Peter, all my constituents in North York-Spadina are cheering you on." I appreciate that from Howard Moscoe and from his constituents. "Keep up your fight against the Liberals and their ventriloquists, the insurance companies. Keep exposing the scoundrels and do not let them wear you down."

That is exactly what we are not going to do. We are not going to let them wear us down, because we want to keep on fighting for the senior citizens, working people, students, young people, innocent injured victims who are going to be victimized again and again and again if Bill 68 is permitted to pass.

All we need are 29 Liberal members who want to keep their ridings in the next general election, who enjoy their jobs as members of provincial Parliament enough that they want to

come back here after the next general election. For those 29 members to vote against Bill 68 would guarantee its defeat, and again, the 29th phone call will get a copy of One Hundred Monkeys.

Rick Thacker from Willowdale phoned in. He says he is not an NDPer, but he is disgusted with Bill 68. He applauds our opposition to it and he encourages us on.

James Chow from Thorncliffe Park Drive in Toronto calls in and supports our opposition to Bill 68. He says the Ontario government is out to lunch, it is taking away people's rights and innocent people are going to suffer. He knows what Bill 68 is all about.

Mike Pentland from Burlington calls up and he says he does not normally agree with the New Democratic Party but he agrees with our opposition to Bill 68. So Mike Pentland from Burlington, who does not normally find himself in alignment with the New Democratic Party, says no to Bill 68, no to this time closure motion.

1530

It is these phone calls and these messages of support that make it possible for me to carry on. I tell members, once those phone calls and messages stop, I am going to sit down. Once those phone calls, messages and notes in the mail stop coming in to my Queen's Park office or by phone at 965-7714, I am going to stop fighting against this time allocation motion; but as long as the people of Ontario keep on saying no to no-fault, no to the Liberals' arrogance, no to the Liberals' jackboot policies, no to time allocation, I am going to keep on standing up here fighting for the people of Ontario and fighting for the innocent injured victims, the taxpayers and the drivers of Ontario, all of whom are going to be hammered when Bill 68 passes.

There is a suggestion being made—because the Liberals are fighting back, no two ways about it—that somehow it is only Conservatives or New Democrats and their supporters who would oppose Bill 68.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate your intervention, because indeed it is difficult for people to hear if people insist on nattering, yapping and just talking through their hats.

I tell members, there is a message being given. I think this is the fourth week I have been here—really the fifth week, when you include my initial comments about Bill 68 during committee of the whole. So this is five weeks we have been doing this and we are not finished canvassing all the relevant information. The problem is, we wanted to debate Bill 68 but the Liberals are forcing us now to debate a time allocation motion. It is the Liberals who are guilty of filibustering, it is the Liberals who are guilty of obstructionism, it is the Liberals who are preventing us from getting down to a discussion about Bill 68, because they keep on bringing these interlocutory motions, if you will.

As I was trying to tell members—and I have no doubt this is going to generate some real howls, some real squealing from the Liberal ranks here. Members are going to hear the squeals. Let me explain this to members. It is not just New Democrats and Conservatives out there in communities all over Ontario who are opposed to Bill 68 and opposed to this time allocation. I got a letter today and it is from a lawyer, Herman Turkstra in Hamilton. He is not just a lawyer, he is also a very prominent activist within the Liberal Party of Ontario.

Mr Turkstra writes to me: "It bothers me deeply every time the NDP becomes the conscience for my party. As a long-term member of the Liberal Party and a member of a Hamilton provincial Liberal riding association executive"—

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, why would the member for Don Mills be hollering out that this gentleman is crazy? I find that particularly offensive, that the member for Don Mills would be hollering that.

Mr Velshi: On a point of information, Mr Speaker—

The Deputy Speaker: There is no point of information.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: That is not a point of order.

Mr Kormos: Mr Turkstra writes: "It bothers me deeply every time the NDP becomes the conscience for my party. As a long-term member of the Liberal Party and a member of a Hamilton provincial Liberal riding association executive, I am embarrassed to see that the public voice of fairness in the debate on Bill 68 comes not from my party but from a member of the opposition. I write to commend you on the speech you are making and I send you what strength I can convey through this letter to encourage you to continue as long as possible. You are speaking for the injured and the weak of this province.

"It has been some time since I represented persons injured by careless drivers and I have absolutely no economic interest in that kind of litigation. I have to say that because, suddenly, lawyers have become, in the eyes of the government, unreliable sources of input"—and in brackets he writes "I will put aside for the moment the number of fund-raising and volunteer-seeking letters and calls that have been made to lawyers by the Liberal Party over the years." Mr Turkstra is not a New Democrat, he is not a Conservative—

Mr Chiarelli: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would like to raise a point of order with respect to some principles of parliamentary procedure dealing with the length of debate that members participate in. I have a few short remarks that I would like to make, Mr Speaker, if you would permit me the opportunity to do so.

The Deputy Speaker: Go ahead.

Mr Chiarelli: I am going to address a few remarks to freedom of speech and parliamentary privilege. I am going to refer to Beauchesne and other authorities which clearly state that freedom of speech is one of the most basic features of parliamentary privilege. The relevant quotation that I am going to refer to is a quotation from Alistair Fraser on Beauchesne's Rules and Forms of the House of Commons of Canada. The relevant quotation regarding the concern about members' exploiting their right to speak is the following: "Freedom of speech does not mean that members have an unlimited or unrestrained right to speak on every issue. The rules of the House impose limits on the participation of members and it is the duty of the Speaker to restrain those who abuse these rules."

I am going to refer to a precedent at Westminster in 1881, where Parliament for the first time imposed the concept or the idea of closure. At that time it was not at the instance of any member or any party in the Parliament at Westminster, it was at the instance of the Speaker himself. At that point, after a debate had gone on for some 41 hours, the Speaker basically stopped the debate and this is the quote from the Speaker of the time:

"The dignity, the credit and the authority of this House are seriously threatened," Speaker Brand declared, "and it is necessary that they should be vindicated." He declined to call upon any more members to speak and proceeded to put the question. His action was supported by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, and the following day the powers of the Speaker were formally augmented by resolution of the House to allow for such a procedure."

Mr Speaker, precedents were meant to be made. We were not meant to be ruled from the grave. We have seen here in our Legislature a single member consume all available time for debate on the matter at hand, that is, motion 30. I am submitting to you that one member's having consumed the amount of time that he has done to date is an abuse of the privilege of this Legislature and of all other members who choose to speak.

I am asking you, Mr Speaker, to consider whether or not this is a situation and a circumstance whereby you, with your authority and good judgement, should create a precedent and in fact permit another member of this Legislature to speak at this point.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Mr Speaker, I would think that for you to intervene at this point or, quite frankly, any other point, to interrupt a long discussion on a very important, in fact, the most important and controversial issue facing drivers in this province, is extremely controversial. It is something the government does not want to live with. The fact of the matter is that your job is to make sure that this place is running smoothly. The fact that the government does not want to have a lengthy debate and does not want to have a fair and lengthy debate on this topic, is not something for you to worry about. That is something for the government to worry about. It has consistently called this order each day, when there are other matters on the order paper that could be dealt with.

I think it would be setting an incredible precedent for you to intervene to have our member for Welland-Thorold not able to continue. There have not been consistent and ongoing complaints about repetitiveness. There are other sections of the standing orders that have not been raised by members of the government.

1540

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr D. S. Cooke: There are other sections of our standing orders that have not been raised by members of the Liberal Party. In fact, the few times that the standing orders have been raised on the order of repetitiveness, the Speaker in the chair at the time has consistently ruled that the member for Welland-Thorold was not being repetitive and that it was not a point of order and not a point of privilege. That is the position that was taken as late as last Thursday. There is nothing that has changed today that would force you to rule in any other way.

I would ask that the Liberal caucus sit down and allow this debate to continue in the orderly way that it has been going for several weeks at this point.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the member still want to make some more comments?

Mr Chiarelli: The only comment that I would make, Mr Speaker—and thank you for the opportunity—is to underline the point of order that I am raising, which is that in my humble opinion I believe there is an obligation on your office, on the Chair, to make a determination on the words of Beauchesne and

Alistair Fraser that I quoted, that the members do not have "an unlimited or unrestrained right to speak." It is an appropriate time for your office to make a deliberation on what the extent of those words mean.

That is an authority that I have quoted. It is an authority that is well respected and has been quoted in various parliaments from time to time. I think it is time in this House that your office, the Speaker, indicate some rules and some parameters for those words, "Freedom of speech does not mean that members have an unlimited or unrestrained right to speak on every issue." So I do ask you, Mr Speaker, to give serious consideration to my point of order and hopefully you would see fit to render a decision with some forethought.

The Deputy Speaker: Since the references made go back quite a while, I will examine that very carefully. I will reserve judgement on that, but until I come out with my judgement we shall proceed with the normal course of events.

Mr Kormos: I was not at all surprised by that interjection because I have no doubt that the Liberal members would not want to hear what Mr Turkstra from Hamilton has to say about his own party. Mr Turkstra writes to me, dated 22 April 1990:

"Dear Mr Kormos:

"It bothers me deeply every time the NDP becomes the conscience for my party. As a long-term member of the Liberal Party and a member of a Hamilton provincial Liberal riding association executive, I am embarrassed to see that the public voice of fairness in the debate on Bill 68 comes not from my party but from a member of the opposition.

"I write to commend you on the speech you are making and I send you what strength I can convey through this letter to encourage you to continue as long as possible. You are speaking for the injured and the weak of this province.

"It has been some time since I represented persons injured by careless drivers, and I have absolutely no economic interest in that kind of litigation. I have to say that because, suddenly, lawyers have become, in the eyes of the government, unreliable sources of input. I will put aside for the moment the number of fund-raising and volunteer-seeking letters and calls that have been made to lawyers by the Liberal Party over the years.

"But after years of having represented injured persons, I understand the system well and I know the role played in our society by the system of reparation for damage caused to one citizen by another. This principle," Mr Turkstra writes, "has been part of every legal system since the dawn of recorded laws. It serves to restore balance in society. It is what society gives back when it takes away the right of revenge.

"I understand the issues. More important, I have learned that monetary damages help heal the injury. I have enclosed a small case history that you may find useful. Beyond that history, I have seen hundreds of examples where the compensation ends the anger and frustration and helps the injured person live with the pain. Damages for pain and suffering are found in our most essential humanity, and compensation for pain and suffering is the hallmark of a wise judicial system.

"In addition to having to cope with the fact that my party," and that is the Liberal Party, "is proposing to transfer economic resources from the injured to the healthy and to their insurers"—Mr Speaker, do you realize how important this particular comment is?—"In addition to having to cope with the fact that my party, the Liberal Party, is proposing to transfer economic resources from the injured to the healthy and to their insurers, I have to come to grips with the fact that my party should be the government that proposes to take away the right

of citizens to go to an impartial judge to determine what is fair. That is anathema.

"This right, present in Canada since the founding of our country, has survived two world wars, a variety of political regimes and almost constant attack. Governments and politicians in power do not like people going to courts, do not like lawyers and for sound reasons."

Understand this, Mr Speaker, what Mr Turkstra is writing, "Governments and politicians in power do not like people going to"—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please, the member for York Mills.

Mr Kormos: Understand what Mr Turkstra is saying, Mr Speaker: "Governments and politicians in power do not like people going to courts, do not like lawyers and for sound reasons."

Mr Turkstra goes on, "I am certain that you are speaking for some Liberal members of the assembly as well as for those of us who can only sit on the sidelines."

I hope that Mr Turkstra is right. I hope that Mr Turkstra is correct when he says that he believes I speak for some Liberal members of this assembly as well as for those who can only sit on the sidelines, because it is those 29 Liberals who can defeat this bill by voting against it, who can defeat this motion by permitting full debate and then defeat Bill 68 by voting against it. It is those 29 Liberals who will not have to face resignation, the prospect of resignation and looking for a new job after the next general election.

I tell you, Mr Speaker, their constituents will be extremely grateful to them, and I can promise you this—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: It is difficult to predict people's political futures. But I can promise that every one of the 29 Liberals who votes against Bill 68 will get re-elected in his or her riding. And I tell you this, Mr Speaker. I would go to the ridings of each and every one of those 29 Liberals who vote against this legislation to help tell their constituents—

Mr Ferraro: Oh, please. You blew it right there, Pete.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

1550

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, I should tell you that I have not got the results yet sent down from my office about who the winner is of One Hundred Monkeys, but we are looking forward to hearing the name of the 29th person who called citing the name of the book One Hundred Monkeys, and I will find out who the new owner of this book is going to be.

I should tell you that we found a few more of the "No-Fault, No Thanks" buttons that we are pleased to send out to people who call us here at Queen's Park, 965-7714. When I was up in North Bay I stuffed both my suit pockets with them and they were certainly popular items up there. I ran out of them really fast and I apologize to those people in North Bay who did not get one because the demand was so great.

As I say, further to Mr Turkstra's letter, I will be the first to announce to the constituents of the riding of any Liberal member who indeed has the courage and the sense of compassion, caring about innocent injured victims, caring about taxpayers, caring about drivers, that their member should be supported by

virtue of what he or she did with respect to Bill 68. However strange that might seem, I would just have the utmost personal regard and respect for the Liberal member who showed that type of courage that the partisan issue would not enter into it.

Mr Turkstra writes, "I find it incongruous that a member of the New Democratic Party would become the voice of so many Liberals, those of us who cannot speak in the debate." Mr Turkstra is a leading Liberal in Hamilton, a long-time Liberal, and I can tell you this: Mr Turkstra's name is known in the Premier's office. Mr Turkstra is that prominent a Liberal that he is well known in the Premier's office, and Mr Turkstra writes that he finds it "incongruous that a member of the NDP would become the voice of so many Liberals, those of us who cannot speak in the debate. I know that there are thousands of Liberals across this province who are deeply disappointed with their own party because of this legislation and because of the approach taken to its enactment. The incongruity arises from the fact that we recognize that you may have a different long-term agenda," and that is true.

We believe in a public, driver-owned, non-profit auto insurance system, one in which innocent injured victims are compensated for their pain and suffering and one in which those same victims have the right to use the courts to enforce what is rightly theirs.

We in the New Democratic Party have firmly supported and continue to support the right of people to obtain access to a courtroom to enforce their rights. That is the incongruity that Mr Turkstra speaks of. "The incongruity arises from the fact that we recognize that you may have a different long-term agenda. And that many of the Liberals who disagree with Bill 68 have as deep and abiding a distrust of government insurance agencies as they have of insurance companies."

Mr Turkstra is well aware of what our long-term agenda is. New Democrats believe in the right to sue. We believe that innocent injured victims must be adequately and fully compensated for their pain and suffering and loss of enjoyment of life. We believe that a public, driver-owned, non-profit system can deliver that type of insurance coverage more fairly and certainly more affordably.

"In the last analysis, we believe that private and public bureaucracies function in very similar ways. But notwithstanding this difference of long-term views, you are carefully and accurately articulating the heartfelt beliefs of many of us. I am sure that I am not the only Liberal in this province who is grateful to you for that."

Mr Turkstra writes: "When I appeared before the committee dealing with the bill, it was suggested that the message I brought should be taken to Liberal riding associations. I have tried to do that. In the case of the Hamilton Centre Liberal association, Chris Ward's staff came to that riding association meeting with a copy of the Constitution to prevent any kind of formal expression of opinion on technical grounds."

Mr Turkstra is writing about being guillotined, about being muzzled in his own party. He indicates that he tried to take his message to Liberal riding associations and, in the case of Hamilton Centre Liberal association, the minister's staff came to that riding association meeting with a copy of the Constitution to prevent any kind of formal expression of opinion and to prevent it on purely technical grounds—pettifoggery, if you will. That is a most serious thing for Mr Turkstra to say and it is one that I am confident is accurate.

In the case of his own riding association, the minister's executive refused to hold a public meeting to discuss the issue. This is a letter from Herman Turkstra, a prominent, leading

Liberal activist in the Hamilton area, on the executive of his provincial riding association and a gentleman who has been so active and so involved in Liberal Party politics that, as I say, his name is well known in the Premier's office and in a whole lot of other leading Liberals' offices.

Mr Turkstra writes that in the case of his own riding association, the minister's executive refused to hold a public meeting to discuss the issue. I believe that could only have happened on his explicit instructions. The attempt to close down debate in the Legislature parallels the attempt to close down debate in the riding associations, parallels the attempt to stop us from distributing literature at the annual meeting of the Liberal Party in Windsor. The Liberals of Ontario will not just muzzle the opposition; they will muzzle and strangle and choke to death dissent in their own party.

Mr Turkstra writes that there was effective intervention prohibiting Liberals from distributing literature at the annual meeting of the Liberal Party in Windsor. He goes on and parallels the attempt of the Minister of Financial Institutions to prevent the release to the public of information gathered by the government to research the bill.

Mr Turkstra goes on: "I feel morally certain that we will soon see a massive advertising campaign attempting to mislead the public of this province into thinking that this bill is fair."

You know what, Mr Speaker? In that regard too, I can tell you that Mr Turkstra is 100 per cent accurate. Because of the attention that has been brought to Bill 68 as a result of this time allocation motion and this debate right here in the Legislature, the Liberals will be mounting an expensive campaign, one paid for entirely with taxpayers' money, that will attempt to mislead the public of this province into thinking that the bill is fair.

Once a party starts down the road of closing down real discussion, there is no easy ending. I know that as long as more than 80 per cent of the voters are not involved in injuries, it will be politically easy to focus on premiums while obscuring the transfer of economic benefits from the injured to the insurance companies and the car drivers. With a little careful tinkering, Bill 68 could be made to injure a sufficiently small number of people that the political repercussions will be small.

Mr Turkstra writes on, "But as I always thought that the Liberal Party stood for strong efforts on behalf of minorities, the poor, the disenfranchised, I find it dismaying to see money taken from the innocent injured victims of accidents so that the uninjured auto owners and insurance companies can benefit."

That is what we have been trying to say all along, that what Bill 68 is all about is creating a \$1-billion windfall for the auto insurance industry, a billion bucks in new profits by taking that money from taxpayers, by taking that money from drivers and by taking that money from innocent injured victims. We know that at least 95 per cent of all innocent injured accident victims will not receive a penny of compensation for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life if Bill 68 passes. That billion-dollar payday for the insurance industry that this bill will create gouges drivers with higher and higher premiums.

The minister has already told the people of Ontario that people will face premium increases of up to 50 per cent once Bill 68 passes, and we have just learned recently that almost a third of one million drivers in Ontario will face premium increases of up to 80 per cent.

Mr Pouliot: On a point of order: M. le Président, with respect, I would like to draw your attention to article 5(a) of the standing orders, and I quote, sir: "The presence of at least 20 members of the House, including the Speaker, is necessary to constitute a meeting of the House for the exercise of its

powers." Therefore, with respect, I trust that the House is not duly constituted. Would you kindly check for a quorum under 5(a).

The Deputy Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1601

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum is present. The member for Welland-Thorold may proceed.

Mr Kormos: Thank you. I appreciate the chance.

Mr Turkstra writes on that he finds it dismaying to see money taken from the innocent injured victims of accidents so that insurance companies can benefit. He writes: "I drive through the shopping centres surrounding Toronto and see the ease with which consumer goods are purchased. The governor of the Bank of Canada increases interest rates again to put a lid on buying pressure caused by excessive spending. In the midst of this land of VCRs, two- or three-car families, 36-inch TV screens, \$75 tickets to *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Les Misérables*, 3,800-square-foot homes replacing the traditional 2,700-square-foot homes, it's mind-boggling to think of what's happening by virtue of Bill 68. Savings cannot morally be made at the expense of the victim."

Mr Turkstra writes on that his party, the Liberal Party, "proposes to spend \$1 billion on Toronto's subway to encourage people not to drive cars. It subsidizes GO Transit for the same purpose. If these campaigns are successful, an increasing percentage of the victims of accidents will be pedestrians or passengers. It is quite incongruous that the economic welfare of victims, many of whom are not auto owners, will be sacrificed for the benefit of those who can afford to buy cars for values that now routinely cost more than \$15,000."

The next paragraph is most telling: "Somewhere along the way we lost sight of common sense. I think it occurred when the insurance company presidents threatened the Premier they would leave Ontario. Perhaps we lost sight of common sense when someone forgot to tell the minister that the reason for the premium increase was that companies had mismanaged the rates," and I tell you, Mr Speaker, they have been less than candid about their real profits.

Mr Turkstra writes: "I have reached the conclusion that we have elected the wrong people to represent our party." Mr Turkstra, a leading Liberal in the Hamilton area, a member of a provincial riding association executive, writes, "I have reached the conclusion that we have elected the wrong people to represent our party."

"As far as the Hamilton area is concerned,"—Mr Turkstra writes specifically about Hamilton—"if Chris Ward will shut down debate on this issue, then clearly I have misperceived"—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Mr Kormos: Mr Turkstra writes, "As far as the Hamilton area is concerned, if Chris Ward will shut down debate on this issue, then clearly I have misperceived his fundamental beliefs and I strongly hope that the Liberals in his riding will find a more appropriate candidate for the next election. It will be a difficult and painful job, but there obviously has to be some changes made. Bill 68 has become a litmus test of the party."

"I am tempted to make one last point," Mr Turkstra carries on. "As we debate, as well, in these days the nature of our national Constitution, the conduct of my party," the Liberal Party, "in relation to Bill 68 has raised very fundamental issues about the role of caucus loyalty and the function of members of

riding associations. When our party was in opposition, our riding association members' brains were useful to the party. Now that the party has become the party in power, it seems that riding association members are to become mere warm bodies to put up signs and deliver brochures.

"All this discussion has brought to my mind that it is perfectly all right for a Democratic senator to disagree publicly with a Democratic president in our neighbouring country, but in Ontario everyone but the Cabinet become dolts after the election, except for fund-raising. Perhaps the result of the cabinet's control of caucus and the party membership demonstrated in these discussions will bring all of us to realize that there is a fundamental flaw in our present system of party politics, one that warrants serious study and perhaps serious change. This is the very issue that faces the federal Conservative caucus, as two of its members vote for their personal convictions about the GST.

"In the meantime, I encourage you to continue your speech. I hope you will continue until the unfairness and immorality of this legislation is brought home to the minds of the people of Ontario and common sense prevails. Thank you for your dedication. Sincerely yours, Herman Turkstra."

I am moved by the candour with which Mr Turkstra approaches and discusses this issue. I appreciate that for Mr Turkstra, indeed as a long-time and faithful and committed Liberal, this must have been a very painful exercise for him, an exercise that none of us envies.

I know, similarly, that for Mr Turkstra to have written this letter to me—and I asked Mr Turkstra whether it would be appropriate from his point of view, acceptable to him that I discuss this letter publicly, and he gave me his consent, his permission to do so. Because I understand that the sensitivity of the matter and the pain which accompanies the drafting and the preparation of this letter are profound. But I am moved by the letter, by its content, by its tone. I am moved by the fact that when I have been speaking these last few weeks about time allocation, about the unfairness of restricting debate, about some of the many reasons why full debate is required, I could tell you, Mr Speaker, that I am pleased to speak not only for New Democrats in Ontario but for Liberals as well.

I tell you that for the Liberals for whom I speak, I understand that there may well be some ideological differences that would make it difficult for some of them to ever support the New Democratic Party. At the same time, I know that there are Liberals across Ontario who recognize that it is indeed the New Democrats at Queen's Park and in Ottawa, Parliament Hill, who do speak out for the disfranchised, who do speak out for the men and women who work for livings and who work hard, and not for the insurance companies that gouge and make profits on top of profits.

1610

I should mention that Mr Turkstra, in writing this letter, mentioned at the beginning of the letter an illustration, and not a fictitious one. The commentary is this: Approximately four years ago, JT was riding her bicycle at 6:15 in the morning on the sidewalk when she was struck by a van delivering children to an arena. She sued for her injuries, which would not meet the threshold of Bill 68. In other words, in Bill 68 in the instance of a woman who suffers a cracked rib, fractures to the facial bones that have left her with significant pain even four years after the accident, this woman's injuries as a totally innocent victim would not pass the threshold. She is not entitled under Bill 68 to

be compensated for her pain and suffering and her loss of enjoyment of life.

She sued for her injuries. As I say, she could not have sued had Bill 68 been in effect. Bill 68 denies a woman like the woman we are speaking of here the right to sue. Those injuries, which would not meet the threshold, which would not entitle her to any compensation under the system the Liberals would propose, consisted of a cracked rib that healed improperly aligned and fractures to the facial bones.

None of the injuries are obviously apparent today, but both the ribs and facial bones are significantly painful every day and most nights four years after the accident. The woman was 76 years old at the time. She is 80 now. I cannot emphasize this enough: What Bill 68 would do is take a woman who is 76 years old, who is injured with a cracked rib improperly aligned and fractures to the facial bones, and the Liberals in Ontario would deny her any compensation for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life. They would tell her: "You can't be compensated for that. You can't look to the wrongdoer to be compensated for that. You can't look to his insurance company to be compensated for the pain and suffering you've endured, nor to your own."

JT was 76 at the time. Her lawyers recovered a moderate settlement for her. JT used the funds to assist her community in purchasing an extension to the public bikeways in the community. The council of the municipality subsequently cited her publicly for her contribution to the community. Payment of the damages and her resulting ability to make something positive happen as a result of her injuries made the pain easier to bear and removed the lingering anger caused by the sudden and unforeseen impact—the trauma.

She is now approximately 80 years old, and when asked by me to comment on the legislation and the fact that persons who have been injured like her could not sue the negligent driver and would receive nothing for their pain and suffering, she replied, "That's foolish and there will be lots more careless drivers."

The anecdote that Mr Turkstra sends to us that he made reference to in the letter in some respects says it all. We must not forget that the threshold is not about keeping minor and modest injuries out of any compensatory scheme; it is about broken backs, broken legs, broken arms, fractured ribs, fractured skulls. Those injuries would not pass the threshold. That is what Bill 68 is all about.

The JTs of the world, the 80-year-old women who are innocent injured victims, would be denied compensation under Bill 68. It is the JTs of the world about whom we have to question the Minister of Financial Institutions. We have to do that during committee of the whole debate, and it is committee of the whole debate that this time allocation motion is all about, depriving not only us in the opposition, but it is a time allocation motion on the people of Ontario. It is a closure on the people of Ontario because it prohibits them from hearing what the minister has to say about 76-year-old women who suffer cracked ribs and fractured facial bones and suffer pain still, four years after the accident, who would not receive a penny in compensation for pain and suffering and the loss of enjoyment of life if Bill 68 is passed.

The concern about this time closure motion has spread across the province, and it is a concern that has permeated households across the province.

I heard from a woman, Betty-Anne Vigh. In October 1987, Mrs Vigh was involved in an automobile accident. She received nerve damage at that time and was unable to continue her work

as a social worker. You will remember, Mr Speaker, that the other day we talked about no-fault benefits and the difficulty that insured persons have getting their no-fault benefits, benefits that are rightly theirs, from their very own insurance companies. We talked about how this is not going to change under Bill 68, under the regime that the Liberals want to impose on the people of Ontario. Indeed, if anything, it may get worse. The leopard has not changed its spots. The auto insurance industry in this province is all about making profits, and profits it has made.

How do they make profits? They make profits by charging premiums as high as possible and by paying out compensation as little as possible. That is how the private, corporate, profit-making auto insurance industry operates, and that is why we believe in a public, non-profit auto insurance system where the motive will not be to charge the highest possible premiums and pay out the least amount of compensation.

Let's take a look at, again, another real life, real person scenario when it comes time to dealing with her own insurance company. Mrs Vigh, who received nerve damage and was unable to continue her work as a social worker, was promised no-fault benefits from Halifax Insurance Co on Eglinton Avenue here in Toronto, but she never received any. Physicians urged her to have therapy. The insurance company sent her to its doctor, who was so rude and horrible to Mrs Vigh that her own family doctor told her to complain to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.

Mrs Vigh phoned this in to my office here at Queen's Park, like all of those other hundreds and thousands of phone callers who have been phoning in all of last week and on Friday and starting at nine o'clock this morning. The insurance company sent her to its doctor, who was so rude and horrible to Mrs Vigh that she was told to complain to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.

The insurance company's doctor told her that she had a virus similar to polio which was responsible for her condition. The lady is smashed up as an innocent injured victim in a car accident, and her insurance company, which is obligated on paper to pay her no-fault benefits, has a company doctor who is mucking around talking about a polio-like virus that the woman has contracted. So the doctor for the insurance company tells her that she has a virus similar to polio which is responsible for her condition and not the damaged nerves and that—catch this, Mr Speaker, because this is incredible—she had contracted this virus on the day of her car accident. Right? She got the virus on the very same day as the car accident, and what that meant was that she was not eligible for no-fault benefits.

This lady has seen a number of specialists who say that she has severe whiplash injury and nerve damage. The insurance company sent her to another doctor who in his report details how he performed an examination which Mrs Vigh says just never happened. The second insurance company doctor says that he performed an examination on her that Mrs Vigh says did not happen; no way. She was again denied benefits.

She is now in dire financial straits, has lost her car and is being evicted from her apartment. Here is a lady who worked as a social worker, paid her own way, paid premiums that were probably out of this world and looks to her insurer for some modest no-fault benefits, the kind that the Liberals say is going to happen under their bill.

We have had no-faults in this province for over a decade and the insurance companies are going to be no more eager to pay them out under their friends the Liberals' scheme than they are under the existing no-fault provisions. This sort of mucking around does not happen in public, non-profit, driver-owned sys-

tems. Betty-Anne Vigh from Thorncliffe Park Drive has the misfortune of having to deal with an insurance company in Ontario. Were she in British Columbia, there is a public, non-profit, driver-owned automobile insurance system, one that the New Democrats started and one that Social Credit there carries on because it knows that the Insurance Corp of British Columbia—public, driver-owned, non-profit auto insurance—can provide insurance more fairly and more affordably and that tragedies like Betty-Anne Vigh's do not happen.

1620

Michael Pearl from Welland Avenue here in Toronto called in to say he is not a usual supporter of the New Democratic Party, but in this case wants to give us all the support he can in our fight against Bill 68.

Alan Goldin from Thornhill called in this afternoon and said he is totally behind our stand on Bill 68. He said to keep on going.

Audrey Campeau from Pitt Street in Cornwall called in this afternoon. She is opposed to Bill 68 and wants to see a full debate on it. She cannot understand why the Liberals are fleeing from debate, why they are afraid to debate Bill 68, why they are afraid to be confronted on how bad Bill 68 really is. She said she just does not know where the provincial and federal governments think the middle and working classes are going to get the money to pay for all the increases. We are talking about a government right here at Queen's Park that wants to abolish the middle class. I tell members this, they have done more to erode the middle class in this province since 1987 than any other government has in such a short period of time.

R. Volpe from East York called in and congratulated the opposition. He wants to see this time allocation motion defeated. R. Volpe knows that only 29 Liberals have to vote against it, that is all, and that will demonstrate which 29 Liberals really like their jobs. Those are the people who are going to get re-elected. The 29 Liberals who vote against this time allocation motion are the ones who are telling their constituents that they represent the constituency and not the auto insurance industry here in Ontario. That is what they are telling those good people in their ridings, when those 29 Liberals vote against time allocation, closure, which is what we are debating right now, and vote against Bill 68.

Joy Moon from Macpherson Avenue in Toronto phoned in: "Keep at it. Voted Liberal almost every time for the last 30 years, but not any more." That is the sort of thing that is happening all over this province, and every day I am convinced that there are more and more people who are listening to what the Liberals are doing to the opposition here at Queen's Park and what they are doing to the taxpayers and drivers of Ontario and to innocent injured victims. I am convinced that there are more and more people across Ontario who are saying, "No way."

Peter Robinson from Oshawa phoned in this afternoon. He feels strongly about how Bill 68 and the Liberals are taking away people's rights to use the courts to resolve their differences, to seek relief when they have suffered injuries as innocent injured victims. Peter Robinson from Sedan Crescent in Oshawa phoned in. That is the first time he has ever agreed with a filibuster. I have to tell Mr Robinson this is not a filibuster; this is just a speech on a time allocation motion. We are not permitted to filibuster here in our British, Canadian, Ontario parliamentary system. What we are doing is addressing the issues as we see them, the issues that are important to be considered in the course of this time allocation motion.

Peter Robinson from Oshawa says that the legal system is important to this country and that people must be allowed to use the courts to seek protection and obtain protection from wealthy and powerful organizations and bodies like private corporate insurance companies.

Joseph and Sarah Kohn from Willowdale phoned up this afternoon, saying they always voted Liberal but not if Bill 68 is passed. These people, the Kohns, from Willowdale always voted Liberal but they are not about to vote Liberal again. I will tell members what might persuade them. It is if even 29 Liberals voted against Bill 68 and voted against this time allocation motion. All we need are 29 people from the Liberal ranks to show that they are more interested in innocent injured victims, more interested in taxpayers, more interested in insurance premiums than they are in the profits of the insurance companies. All we need are 29 in the Liberal ranks here and this time allocation motion can be defeated, and so can Bill 68.

Alan Hopkins from Hamner, up near Sudbury, calls in. Mr Hopkins says that he is opposed to the closure motion, certainly to Bill 68. He says, "The Liberal House leader must have forgotten that democracy was born out of discussion and not out of closure motions." Mr Hopkins would put to the Liberal House leader, have the Liberals forgotten that democracy was born out of discussion and not out of closure? To avoid the embarrassment to the Liberal Party of having 29 of its members, those Liberals who want to keep their ridings, want to retain their jobs here at Queen's Park, to avoid that embarrassment, all the Liberal House leader has to do is withdraw the time allocation motion and let us get on with the job of debating and discussing Bill 68. That is all we have ever wanted to do.

We are not obstructing anything. We are not being obstructionist. It is the Liberals who are being obstructionist with their time allocation motion. All we want to do is talk about Bill 68. We would rather not have to debate time allocation. What an unpleasant thing to have to debate the muzzling, the strangling of the opposition. What an unpleasant thing to have to debate the jackboot tactics of the Liberals here at Queen's Park. What an unpleasant thing to have to do. We would rather be talking about auto insurance, about Bill 68. We would rather be debating the issues.

Joseph A. Bonomi runs the Kozy Korner Variety Store on Pine Street South in Thorold. The Kozy Korner Variety Store on 186 Pine Street South in Thorold is as great a place to stop in and pick up groceries or incidentals as you can ever find, and the Bonomis are as honest and caring small-business people as you would ever want to meet. Mr Bonomi writes: "I, the undersigned, a Canadian citizen, am very much against this no-fault insurance that is to be pushed down upon us without a debate. It only breeds more bad and unsafe drivers, as if we don't have enough. It will cost the average safe driver twice as much in the long term of time." Mr Bonomi's opinions are opinions that we in the New Democratic Party respect. I am proud to be able to speak for Mr Bonomi here at Queen's Park and I make no excuses for not speaking on behalf of the insurance companies. The Liberals do that well enough.

Mr Pouliot: Standing order 5(a): With respect, Mr Speaker, shame and embarrassment have cost us the quorum. Would you kindly check if the House is duly constituted?

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1631

The Speaker: I can now inform the member for Lake Nipigon that there is a quorum. The member for Welland-Thorold may wish to continue.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Indeed I do wish, and I appreciate the opportunity that you have given me.

We have talked about Mr Bonomi, good man, small businessman, a cozy corner variety store on Pine Street South in Thorold. He is opposed to Bill 68 and he is indignant about the fact that the Liberals do not want to permit a debate on it.

Robert Botnick from Berczy Street in Barrie writes in. We just got this letter this morning. "I have been inspired by your impetuous persistence in the debate over the closure motion concerning Bill 68." I have been persistent, and I make no excuses, no apologies for being persistent. I suppose I have been at least a little bit impetuous, and so be it. I make no apologies for that either.

Mr Botnick writes, "I applaud your effort and hope the Liberals wake up to hear what we voters are saying."

Look what is being written here. Mr Botnick from Barrie hopes that the Liberals will wake up to hear what the voters are saying. He has been injured in two motor vehicle accidents, neither one being his fault. The first accident was in June 1988, the second one in February of just this year, February 1990. "Needless to say," he writes, "my life has been nothing short of disastrous, both physically and emotionally as well as financially."

He writes that he was a student at Sheridan College in Oakville, participating in the industrial maintenance mechanics program until his most recent accident. That was in February 1990. He was in this course retraining for a new career owing to back, neck and hand injuries received in his first car accident. He was receiving unemployment insurance training benefits through the Canadian Jobs Strategy branch of the Department of Employment and Immigration. He is the father of four young children and has many other financial obligations that he just cannot meet at this time. This is because he has lost all of his income, training benefits, day care expenses and travel allowance.

In the case of Mr Botnick, he is one who is receiving his no-fault benefits, but because, as we know, no-fault benefits are only 80 per cent of the income being replaced—at that, only up to a maximum of \$600 a week. That does not say much to the GM worker who makes \$45,000 a year and works hard for every penny of it. It does not say much to the high school teacher who makes \$40,000, \$45,000 or \$50,000 a year and works darned hard for it—a maximum of 80 per cent or \$600 a week, and at that you are lucky if you get it.

Do members know what is interesting, though, and why it is important to talk about these letters and phone calls that we get? During the course of our discussion, we have spoken about scenarios. We have talked about the 12-, 13-, 14-year-old kids smashed to the ground by the drunk driver—smashed to the ground, a little kid walking home from school. We have talked about that scenario, the kid who is smashed down by the drunk driver, leaving a trail of blood, skin and flesh on the asphalt, that kid who receives not a penny, even after suffering a broken back, not a penny in compensation for pain and suffering, that 12-, 13-, 14-year-old kid, an innocent injured accident victim receiving not a penny in compensation and not a penny in no-faults and a case wherein the drunk driver who struck that kid down could well receive more money by way of benefits than the kid does.

So here we have a case—because I know that we have talked about students. Members will remember the imaginary scenario we talked about, the one that took place in 1992 about the Bill Innocent family. Members remember the son Jack, who was a medical student in his final year of medical school, just one or two months before his last final exams. It was in April 1992 that the accident happened, and it was under the regime where the Liberals did not find among themselves 29 people who wanted to keep their jobs, so Bill 68 passed because it was rammed through the Legislature, because there was a time allocation motion and there was not full debate. The members will remember that Jack Innocent, struck down by the drunk driver Noel Fault, suffered a concussion, was in the hospital for two days, but was not able, because of dizziness, disorientation and memory lapse, to write his final exams. We talked about Jack Innocent, the student who was denied, and that was a scenario. It was a fictitious one, because we were talking about 1992, we were projecting into the future.

Here is a real-life one. Here is a fellow, Mr Botnick, who had only eight weeks left in his course, was an A student, but because of his injuries he has now been notified by the college that he has lost his year. He contacted the UIC and was told that he cannot receive any further benefits because he has been paid for 61 weeks. He then called social services, welfare, to find out whether he could get some help. He was told that because he was receiving his no-faults, he does not qualify for assistance.

He writes, "To put it bluntly, I am in one hell of a predicament." He asks, "If Bill 68 does not allow people like myself in these straining situations to be able to sue for loss of enjoyment of life, then I want Bill 68 to be scrapped, along with any Liberals who would support such a miscarriage of justice." That is exactly what we are talking about.

Really, we are talking about time allocation. We are also talking about which of these Liberals like their jobs enough to want to come back here after the next general election, and we are talking about the fact that the 29 of them who vote against time allocation and who vote against Bill 68 would be guaranteed of coming back here after the next general election.

Mr Botnick from Barrie writes on, "Once again, I commend both you and your party for standing up for the citizens of this province."

That is what committee of the whole House discussion is all about. It is an opportunity to ask the minister about people like Robert Botnick and to say the minister should tell Robert Botnick right here and now how Bill 68 is going to make life easier for Mr Botnick. Or indeed is Bill 68 only going to make life a lot more profitable for the auto insurance industry, because that is what Bill 68 is all about, big profits for a powerful and wealthy automobile insurance industry, but at the same time condemning people like Robert Botnick to despair and to poverty as a result of taking what is rightfully Mr Botnick's and giving it to the insurance industry as a result of the abuse that Bill 68 constitutes for the driver, who is going to face premium increases of up to 50 per cent.

We have learned that a third of a million drivers, just shy of a third of a million, are going to face premium increases of as high as 80 per cent under Bill 68, and 95 per cent of all innocent injured victims will not be allowed to collect any compensation for their pain and suffering or for their loss of enjoyment of life. That includes not just minor injuries but very serious injuries, like broken legs, broken arms, fractured ribs, fractured skulls, broken backs, that will not pass the threshold. These are people who will not be compensated for their pain and suffering, for their loss of enjoyment of life.

Barry Fitzgerald, who was a provincial candidate in the Welland-Thorold by-election in 1988, phones in, speaking of full support of actions in our work against Bill 68 and the closure motion. Barry Fitzgerald phones in as an ex-provincial candidate in the last by-election down in Welland-Thorold, with full support for what we are doing.

Ralph Thompson phones up from London. Once again, when I say how important it is for the Liberals in this House to vote against time allocation because what that will mean for them is either defeat or success at their own respective polls in their own respective ridings, here is Ralph Thompson from London saying that Bill 68 is bad, closure is bad and that he cannot vote Liberal any more. He just will not do it because of Bill 68 and because of this time allocation motion.

Doris Morrison, bless her, from James Street in Welland—obviously, it is important to hear from people like Ms Morrison. She is proud that her member is fighting the bill that is being imposed on the people of Ontario. She is proud that her member is fighting time allocation, because she knows that those are jackboot tactics and she talks about the vigorous exposé of the injustice of a time allocation motion. So we are pleased to hear from people like Doris Morrison.

1640

These are people who have been phoning here at Queen's Park, phoning from Welland, from all over the province to my office at 965-7714. These people have been phoning at 965-7714 to tell me that the people of Ontario want the legislators of this assembly to think about it when they are imposing time allocation and closure.

Chris Tufford calls from Burlington. He says no to the legislation that would disentitle people from collecting compensation for pain and suffering and loss of enjoyment of life. He says it is unthinkable that an innocent injured victim would be denied an opportunity to be compensated for the pain and suffering and the loss of enjoyment of life, as 95 per cent of all innocent injured victims under Bill 68 are going to be denied any compensation.

More so, they are not going to be permitted to use the courts to seek justice. The courtroom doors are going to be bolted and barred. There will be no courts, there will be no forums in which innocent injured victims who do not pass the threshold—and that is going to be 95 per cent of them—can seek some justice against an insurance industry that can be cruel, that can be inhumane and that can be so unjust and so greedy in its gouging of victims and of drivers.

We are talking about the 29 Liberals who will vote against time allocation so that there can be a debate about Bill 68, because that is what this motion is all about, avoiding and denying any debate on Bill 68. We are looking for those 29 Liberals to come back here after the next general election.

Terry Wylds from Village Greenway in Willowdale phones in and says, "Keep up the filibuster."

Again, I have to explain I am well aware that we cannot filibuster in a provincial sitting. That is a uniquely American phenomenon. Americans can do it; we cannot. Here it is simply a matter of addressing the issues that we want people to consider prior to their deciding how they are going to vote on a motion or on a bill.

I realize that a more talented person could well have made these arguments in a more clever way than I have. I appreciate that. I appreciate that a more skilful speaker would perhaps be more energetic, more inspiring than I have been, but I am doing my very best, trying to make sure that the drivers of Ontario,

trying to make sure that the taxpayers of Ontario, trying to make sure that the innocent injured victims of Ontario are not sold out by the Liberals in favour of big, wealthy, powerful auto insurance companies.

As I say, I am overwhelmed by the challenge inherent in that, because people, people like Terry Wylds, people like Chris Tufford, people like Doris Morrison, from Willowdale and Burlington and Welland, do not have big, big bucks to make big donations come election time. Some of these people may well contribute to any number of political parties, but they do it with \$5 and \$10 and \$15 and \$20 contributions. They do not do it like the hundred grand plus that the auto insurance industry in this province contributed to Liberal candidates in the last general election. They do not do it like that. These are people who, if they do contribute to political parties or to politicians' campaigns, do it with \$5 bills and \$10 bills and \$20 bills, not \$1,000 bills or \$100,000-plus cheques.

These people, the people who have been calling for the last week and a half, may not be the most powerful people in the world. They may not be the wealthiest people in the world. Some of them have apologized in their letters for what they perceive to be perhaps bad spelling or poor penmanship. So in some respects, they do not match up to the insurance companies. The auto insurance companies have their big glassy and chrome high-rises, pretty slick stuff, and their boards of directors have got their deep plush carpets in their board rooms and all the company perks.

These people do not have deep plush carpet. They do not have expensive chrome and glass office towers. But I tell you, Mr Speaker, these folks who are phoning in trying to tell the Liberals of this province that democracy cannot be snuffed out here at Queen's Park are the most important people in the whole world, these people who have been phoning in and sending letters. I tell you that, Mr Speaker, they are the most important people in the whole world, and I do not give a tinker's damn about an automobile insurance industry that would gouge them, abuse them and mistreat them and that would dare to think that it owns a government that will do its bidding by way of Bill 68.

I should mention to you, Mr Speaker, because I know you would be interested, it has been problematic getting some of the messages down, because some of the later messages came down earlier and now some of the earlier messages are coming down later. There is more than one person up at 965-7714 answering the phone.

But Chuck Bougie from Terrace Bay, Ontario, will receive a copy of *One Hundred Monkeys* by Robert Mason Lee. I appreciate Mr Bougie's comments. He feels that the government and the Premier are but puppets for the insurance companies and he calls upon—what is remarkable is that there is a message that is permeating all of Ontario, big cities, small towns. He says, "Tell the Liberals to cut their puppet strings too."

Chuck Bougie from Terrace Bay knows that all there has to be is 29 Liberal members prepared to cut those strings so that the puppeteer cannot manipulate them any more, so that they are free men and women, free to stand up for the rights of drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims. So Chuck Bougie will get *One Hundred Monkeys*. It is great reading.

One of the things it deals with in the book was that there is a lot of commentary on our good friend who represented Ottawa South until his own premature death. He is spoken of well in *One Hundred Monkeys*, and the commentary about Dalton McGuinty in *One Hundred Monkeys* alone is worth buying the book, a fascinating book, fascinating characters. If we have

people like Dalton McGuinty in there, they are undoubtedly going to be fascinating characters.

Let me tell members about Vincent J. Calzonetti from London. Mr Calzonetti writes in—we just got this letter this morning—commending the opposition for its opposition to the time allocation motion. Folks in London know that closure motions, time allocation motions, are undemocratic, that they deny the opposition's right to fulfil its obligations. They guillotine the opposition and they make a mockery out of democracy.

Indeed, we have mentioned before our fears about what is to happen next. We are going to show up one morning and find the doors to this assembly locked and barred. The Liberals do not want to use this assembly, this forum, as one in which we can debate issues. The Liberals do not want to use this as a forum for debate; they want to use it as a podium for their jackbootism. They do not want to debate Bill 68; they want to use this as a rubber stamp for their legislation that is going to incredibly enhance the profits of automobile insurance companies.

1650

Mr Calzonetti writes in commending us for what we have done over the past few weeks. He writes, and again I am flattered and appreciate it and I know it is not true: "You are eloquent, well-informed (and funny on occasion). Fight on."

Mr Speaker, I hope you have been able to share some of Mr Calzonetti's perceptions as to some of the lighter moments. There certainly have to be times at which we can see some levity in the sadness of this whole sad scenario.

We talked about a Richard Botnick from Barrie. Here is a Nancy Botnick from Willowdale. She writes in:

"Just a note to applaud the job you're doing in the Legislature. We are glued to our television sets every day and appreciate the time and energy that the opposition is putting in to be rid of Bill 68 and, more importantly right now, to defeat a time allocation motion. It gives us great satisfaction to watch you put the Liberals, with their arrogance and lies, in their place. We hope you can continue as long as possible or until the Liberals realize how disgusting their proposed legislation is and be rid of it for ever. Our only disappointment is that the newspapers are not doing a good enough job of covering this. We anxiously await the outcome of this proposed legislation and we will definitely remember what the Liberals have done," when it comes to the next general election here in the province of Ontario.

Incredible. I appreciate that comment from Nancy Botnick.

Here is as short a letter as I have received during the course of this whole discussion. Joe Paleggi writes in:

"Dear Mr Kormos:

"Give them hell.

"Yours very truly"—

I am doing my very best and I hope that people are not disappointed.

Here is a letter from Jim Milne that is of interest, I know, to all of us here when we are discussing this time allocation motion. Jim Milne of Whitby, Ontario, writes that he wants to congratulate us on our filibuster—once again, he calls it a filibuster—on the closure motion. It is not a filibuster. We are not filibustering. We are not trying to be obstructionist, Mr Speaker. It is the Liberals who have been obstructing the course of legislation here in the assembly. We just wanted to debate Bill 68. We wanted to debate Bill 68 as it deserves to be debated in committee of the whole House where questions can be asked of the Minister of Financial Institutions and specific issues can

be raised and where the amendments, and there are over 30 of them that the Liberals tabled, plus 20 or so from the Tories—we just wanted to be able to debate Bill 68 and the Liberals said, "No, you can't." What is more obstructionist than that? What is more filibusterous than that?

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Ah, Mr Speaker, I checked that one before I came here today. I knew I wanted to use it at some time. "Filibusterous" is in the Oxford English Dictionary. It is not a neologism; it is a real, honest-to-goodness word with a history of usage. As I say, I checked that in my OED earlier today because I saw the Hansard lady here raise an eyebrow when I said "filibusterous." She thought she caught me. Not today; "filibusterous" is a good one.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Lake Nipigon is creating a disturbance from a seat other than his own. I know the member will be more considerate from here on in. The member for Welland-Thorold now, after having a rest.

Mr Kormos: Please, Mr Speaker, the member for Lake Nipigon is my corner man. I need him here. He is helping make this whole debate possible.

The letter from James Milne is most interesting. As I say, Mr Speaker, I know that you and the other members of this assembly hear what James Milne of Whitby has to say. He congratulates the opposition for its successful filibuster—and it is not a filibuster, Mr Milne—on the closure motion. He says he was not sure whether it was three or four nights on TV, but to be able to continue for so long and put in the time is remarkable.

The news to Mr Milne is that it has been three or four or five weeks, not just nights. I appreciate the fact that he spent three or four nights watching it himself. He notes that there has been the occasional puckish glance. At times we have had to be puckish, once again to relieve us of the misery, the tragedy, of what is happening here. The fact is that a time allocation motion is a sad, sad thing. It is a tragic commentary on the people of Ontario.

Mr Milne praises the Speaker and makes reference to the occasional use by the Speaker of double entendres. He says basically, "Nice going," and he opposes—people in Whitby oppose—time allocation. They specifically oppose what the Liberals are trying to do.

What this is is an appeal to the Liberal members to respect the wishes of the electorate. That is all it is. The people out there in Ontario want to see a full debate over Bill 68. They know that it is so important to them. Why, Roseanne Leclair from Westglen Crescent in Etobicoke faxed in, "Thank you for your continued efforts. Keep up the good work. Ontario is watching." We know that, we know Ontario is watching, because people have been phoning my office, 965-7714, with telephone messages beginning at 8:30 in the morning, carrying on. The phones are still ringing at six and 6:30 at night. My staff has got to go home at five, but people are watching.

Roseanne Leclair writes on: "Please pass my message to the assembly and the absent Liberal members. Ontarians look to their provincial government for fairness regardless of what party is in leadership. As a taxpayer, voter and motorist, I demand that Bill 68 be fully debated. Why is the Premier so fearful of a full debate on Bill 68?"

Why is the Premier so fearful of a full debate on Bill 68? Could it be—an interesting proposition, just a query—that although the Premier has the confidence of the insurance industry,

he has concerns about what the Liberal backbenchers would do after a complete and thorough debate? Roseanne Leclaire could be dead on here, that the Premier is fearful of those 29 Liberals who want to keep their ridings. The Premier knows that Liberals are going to get defeated in the next general election. The Premier knows that. They have as much as written off more than a handful of ridings that are fluke ridings, that went Liberal last election because of the landslide, no two ways about it, but were not Liberal before that and will never be Liberal again.

1700

Do you know what, Mr Speaker? The members who come from those ridings that have been written off by the Premier know who they are. They know that they were elected on a landslide, that they were elected on a Liberal sweep, that they were flukes. They also know that they are not going to be re-elected come the next general election. If they oppose time allocation and they oppose Bill 68 they can be guaranteed their jobs. Those Liberal backbenchers who know that they have been written off by the Premier's office, who know that they have been written off by the Liberal Party of Ontario because they were mere flukes in those ridings, can keep their jobs by simply voting against this time allocation motion and by voting against Bill 68. Their constituents will respect them for that and their constituents will re-elect them.

Do you know what, Mr Speaker? I told you this before and I tell you again: I would be the first person to tell the people from those Liberal ridings where their members voted against Bill 68 that their members did good for them here at Queen's Park. I would be the first person to write letters to the editors of the newspapers in those members' ridings, the members who voted against Bill 68, to tell the people in those communities that their member did good for them; that their member did not sell them out in favour of the profits of the insurance industry. They can count on that. I am on record.

Ontarians look to their provincial government for fairness, regardless of what party is in power. Ms Leclaire said this: "Take heed, Liberals. Motorists vote; insurance companies don't. Are the Liberal members aware that Bill 68 will affect each and every one of them and their families? Must they themselves become victims of negligent drivers before they realize the lack of protection under the so-called Ontario motorist protection plan? "Wake up, you so-called leaders of Ontario. If protecting Ontarians is too much of a task, at least be sensible enough to protect yourself and your own family—oppose Bill 68." Roseanne Leclaire and people like her are the real people in Ontario. They are what this government is supposed to be all about, not all about the insurance companies and their profits and not all about selling out taxpayers, drivers and innocent injured victims.

Mr Speaker, welcome back. You may have not have been able to hear that indeed Chuck Bougie from Terrace Bay, Ontario, is going to receive One Hundred Monkeys. Chuck Bougie knows that all we need is 29 Liberals to serve their constituents rather than the insurance industry and this bad legislation will be history.

Caesar Silva wrote and faxed this message: "Please, please, please, do not stop your filibuster on Bill 68. I feel the public will catch on soon. Most of them are not yet involved with the issues of no-fault insurance. I myself made the mistake of voting for"—I will not name the member's name because that is improper—the member for Dovercourt "who now chooses to support the Liberal position instead of representing his

constituents' interests. I do not trust the so-called watchdog agency that will be regulating the insurance industry. In the past, the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board required individual insurance companies to charge no less than 80 per cent." At least this was the figure he got from an insurance information pamphlet of the going rates. "So much for competitive forces and so much for the public reliance on this watchdog to protect them."

Caesar Silva listened when the Premier promised, in September 1987, that he, the Premier of Ontario, had a very specific plan to reduce automobile insurance premiums in the province of Ontario. Caesar Silva listened very carefully when the Premier said that in September 1987. Caesar Silva voted for a Liberal, the member for Dovercourt, in part because the Premier promised that he, the Premier of the Liberals in Ontario, had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums.

What does Mr Silva get for the trust he placed in Liberals? He gets premium increases of up to 50 per cent and if he or a member of his family suffers the misfortune of being an innocent, injured motor vehicle accident victim, if they are among the 95 per cent, the vast, vast, vast majority of innocent, injured victims, they will get not a cent, not a nickel, not a dime, not a penny in compensation for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life.

Caesar Silva took it as a promise when the Premier said he had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums. Mr Silva feels that promise has been broken and he has been betrayed. Do you want to know something, Mr Speaker? Caesar Silva and all the other hundreds and thousands of people who have been phoning and writing are right.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: Kenneth McNaught, from here in Toronto, a professor at the University of Toronto and a scholar, writes,

"Dear Mr Kormos:

"Just to congratulate you on your very fine solo performance in the Legislature."

Again, Mr Speaker, with all due respect to Mr McNaught, that is not a fair thing to say. The fact is that all of the opposition, all of the members of the New Democratic Party caucus, have participated in this condemnation of the Liberals' closure motion and not just my colleagues in the New Democratic Party caucus, and I am proud to be in their ranks, but the hundreds and thousands of people across Ontario who have been phoning, at 965-7714, and writing, simply, "Peter Kormos, MPP, Queen's Park, Toronto, M7A 1A2," have been a very real part of this debate also, and it is a pleasure. I have not been able to make reference to all of the people who have phoned in or written; there simply has not been time.

We are trying to carry this along as speedily as possible. We are trying to deal with the issues as efficiently as we can, because I know there are other members of my caucus who want to speak on this closure motion as well and so I am being as economical with language—Megan brings more phone calls.

Wally Packer from Orangeville phones in and says, "Doing a great job."

Terri Cosgrove from Forest, Ontario, phones in. Terri Cosgrove is a card-carrying Liberal. She is going to tear up the card. She names the riding she is in. She is in the riding of Lambton. She is a card-carrying Liberal who is going to tear up the card. She says the opposition is doing a great job fighting Bill 68 and fighting closure. Terri Cosgrove, you are dead on.

Ray and Florence Bastedo from Rexdale are dead against no-fault. The Bastedos say, "We shouldn't be penalized for someone else's incompetence." Yes, they are being penalized for the Liberals' incompetence. They are being penalized because the auto insurance industry has taken over this government. Ray and Florence Bastedo do not think it is fair to be penalized for someone else's incompetence. We agree with them.

Bruce Smiley from Etobicoke, more specifically Etobicoke West, says it is a shame that any party would not allow another party to have their questions answered. That is what the Liberals' time allocation motion is all about. The Liberals do not want to be asked questions about Bill 68. The Liberals do not want to participate in a debate about Bill 68. Bruce Smiley from Etobicoke West knows that is wrong. And do you know what, Mr Speaker? I do not think Bruce Smiley is going to vote for a Liberal candidate next time. I think it will be a long, long, long time before he ever even thinks of it again when he sees how they have trampled on democratic principles here in the province of Ontario.

Stan Larsh from Glencoe calls in with support for the filibuster. He says we are doing a great job for Ontario and these Liberals are trying to deprive people of their right to use the courts. He says a lot of people from Glencoe support our opposition to the allocation motion, to the closure, and to Bill 68.

We are pleased to talk to these people. We are pleased to hear from them. We are pleased to be able to represent their views here at Queen's Park. Occasionally the Liberals will display, they will wear on their sleeves, their disdain for the voters of Ontario, and maybe that is just as well.

Wayne Picken from Kingsville called up and he asked, "Do the Liberals realize how many people will drive without insurance because they cannot afford it and how many will flee accident scenes because they do not have insurance?" Wayne Picken is 100 per cent right.

David Russell-Kimmer is a first-year political science student at York University. David Russell-Kimmer says Bill 68 scares the daylights out of him. He congratulates the opposition for its fight and David Russell-Kimmer is offended by the high-handed tactics of the Liberals.

Many people who want to watch the parliamentary network are unable to do so because of conflicting scheduling. They have to be at work; they have to take the kids here and there. I tell members what I am going to do. The sender of the first torn-up Liberal Party membership card that is mailed to my office here at Queen's Park is going to get a videotape of today's debate on the time allocation motion. The sender of the first torn-up Liberal Party membership card is going to get a videotape of today's proceedings, is going to get a "No-fault, No Thanks" button and we are looking forward to that.

So the owner of the first torn-up Liberal Party membership card that is mailed in to my office here at Queen's Park—just addressed to "Peter Kormos, MPP, Queen's Park, Toronto"—is going to get a videotape of today's debates on VHS, ready for the VCR, in colour. The sender of the first torn-up Liberal Party membership card—

Interjections.

Mr. Kerrio: You are out of order, Gilles.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Interjections, no matter where they are made from, are always out of order from all members—

Mr. Kerrio: Right.

The Deputy Speaker: —including the member for Niagara Falls.

Mr Ferraro: Can I have a chance to speak now?

The Deputy Speaker: No, you cannot.

Mr Kormos: I will tell you what, Mr Speaker. The first person to send in a torn-up Liberal Party membership card gets a videotape of today's debate on the time allocation motion.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: Do you want to know something, Mr Speaker? I am so impressed by the calls we got this afternoon for the book, *One Hundred Monkeys*, that the sender of the 100th torn-up Liberal Party membership card is going to get a copy of this book. I am going to go out to This Ain't the Rosedale Library book store and buy another copy of it for the 100th torn-up Liberal Party membership card that is mailed in to me.

Mr Speaker, you know what happened at the onset of the day. One of the Liberal members, the member for Ottawa West, a Liberal, made a motion on a point of order that, if granted, would have the effect of forcing me to end my contribution to this debate. The Speaker will do what he has to do in the context of the rules. I am concerned that the Speaker is put into that position. I am concerned that the Liberals not only do not want to debate Bill 68, but now they want to terminate the debate on their very own time allocation motion.

Mr Chiarelli: No, other people want to talk.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please, member for Ottawa West.

Mr Kormos: Once again, so that the Liberals cannot run roughshod over this Legislature, we need phone calls and we need telephone messages and letters and cards. We need postcards even, like the one from Sue Berg, who sends a postcard in from Welland and she just says, "No-fault, No Thanks."

Postcards, letters, telephone messages—that is the weaponry we will use to fight the Liberal jackbootism here at Queen's Park. These phone calls are bullets in a war—

Mr Callahan: What do you mean "we"?

Mr Kormos: —against a government that does not give a tinker's damn for the welfare of drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims.

Mrs Sullivan: Can he use those words?

Mr Callahan: You have driven the Conservatives right out of this House.

Georgina Ladanyi from St Thomas called in and said: "Congratulations on what you are doing with respect to Bill 68. Keep on going." To Georgina Ladanyi I say, "Thank you, Ms Ladanyi, because it is your encouragement and your enthusiasm"—

1720

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: —"from St Thomas, Ontario that gives me strength, that gives me encouragement, that gives me the

weapons to fight an oppressive government here at Queen's Park."

Stephane Dessureault from Welland calls in with support and says, "Keep on going." We are going to keep on going until we have finished canvassing all of the issues.

Bruce Martin from Thornhill phones in and says he is in full agreement with what we are trying to do to get the Liberals to listen. From Sunderland—and you will recall, Mr Speaker, that Mr Emsley phoned in last week. Mr Emsley phoned in with a message of encouragement and a clear message to the Liberals of Ontario. He puts a note in the mail and he writes:

"Dear Mr Kormos:

"I am a senior citizen and am very interested in what the Liberal government is doing to us regarding Bill 68 and to commend your excellent presentation explaining just how bad this bill is for the Canadian people. Hoping you will be able to deliver the knock-out punch the Liberals so richly deserve, I am sending a clipping of what council and mayor of Georgina think of Bill 68."

Mr Emsley did send a newspaper clipping from Georgina. It is the Georgina Advocate and it is dated 18 April 1990, page 7A: "The council of Georgina, Ontario"—the week prior to 18 April—"last week endorsed a resolution objecting to the province's proposed no-fault insurance scheme despite an objection from councillor Bill Laird."

Bill Laird is an insurance broker. That is where the support for Bill 68 and this insurance scheme is coming from. It is coming from the insurance industry, and the insurance industry is virtually alone in its support of Bill 68.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Kormos: We know that the vast majority of people in Ontario oppose Bill 68.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Interjections, no matter from which seat, are always out of order.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: I think we will recess the House for five minutes, as the members do not care to listen to the Speaker's recommendations.

The House recessed at 1726.

1731

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos: Thank you. Mr Speaker, the council of Georgina passed a resolution condemning Bill 68. What was said? Councillor Clare Morrison read the proposed legislation and found it seriously flawed. Council voted to support the resolution calling on the government to consider alternative methods of reform to automobile insurance and the system governing compensation to victims of accidents.

If the Liberals will not listen to the people from Thunder Bay, the people from Oshawa, the people from Whitby, the people from Welland, if the Liberals will not listen to the people from Sudbury and Windsor and Ottawa, will they please listen to the people from Georgina, who say no to Bill 68. The people of Georgina should be proud of their city council. The people of Georgina can be proud that their city council is working hard to make sure that the residents of Georgina live the way good, hardworking people ought to be able to live here in Ontario.

Now, mind you, this Bill Laird, the insurance broker, the one who did not want to see that motion presented there, was not crazy about the motion, the resolution, but he is an insurance broker, and you have to excuse him because of that. The rest of the council in Georgina did just fine.

I have today's mail in this little file folder.

Linda Williams phoned in from Sarnia. She is in support of scrapping Bill 68 and she says the Liberal Party better wake up and smell the coffee. So Linda Williams from Sarnia knows who she is talking about.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: If the Liberals do not want to listen, they do not have to.

Ms Janice Finlay phoned in from Windsor expressing her dismay for Bill 68 and kindly giving some words of support for me. This is the fuel that gives us energy each day to carry on with this fight against time allocation.

Do not forget, Mr Speaker, the first torn-up Liberal Party membership card that is received by me at my office here gets a videotape of today's debate and the 100th torn-up Liberal membership card gets a copy of the book *One Hundred Monkeys*—great reading.

Judy Rowe calls from Toronto to say that she has no support for this Liberal so-called no-fault insurance scheme. She says there is lots of fault with no-fault, the biggest scam that has gone down in a long time.

Robert Nuttley from South Porcupine calls in and says: "What are the Liberals doing? Are they trying to prove that democracy does not work?" He asks, "Where is the safety measure for common people when a majority government, and an arrogant majority government like the Liberals, are in power if they are successful in muzzling or silencing the opposition?" Then really, as I have said so many times, we might as well lock the doors. The Liberals do not want to participate in any debate on Bill 68. That is what their time allocation motion is all about.

Bev Medland from Toronto calls in to say that her husband got a reply from the Minister of Financial Institutions to a letter he wrote. She says that, unfortunately, it was empty and they would have loved to have had some content in it. It was all fluff. That is what I wanted to talk about for a few minutes, fluff.

The Liberals do not want to debate Bill 68. They love it when they have their own private forum where there is no openness. They will get people on the phone and bend their ear for what seems like hours about what a great scheme they have concocted here, what a great scheme is being cooked up.

The member for Durham was down in Port Colborne speaking to the Rotary club. Members might recall I started talking this afternoon and was going to get back to that, the member for Durham being down in Port Colborne. There is nothing wrong with him going down to Port Colborne. The people in Port Colborne are good, hard-working people. They deserve a heck of a lot better than what this government is giving them.

But the member for Durham goes down there and he gives them fluff. Once again, here is another Liberal spitting out lint. Why? They are so deep in the back pockets of the insurance companies that they are spitting out lint. Well, the member for Durham goes to Port Colborne at a Rotary club dinner—

Mr Callahan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: that member has been told not to use that language to any member of this House and he continues to do it. It is an absolute absurdity to this entire process.

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member will watch his parliamentary language.

Mr Kormos: So we get all this fluff down in Port Colborne. Let me tell members what the fluff amounted to. It amounted to a big zero. It amounted to public relations work.

Mr Chiarelli: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It has to do, once again, with the course of this particular member in this debate. I want to bring to the Speaker's attention that there are some rules in our standing orders which include the fact that a member should not persist in needless repetition. I am reading from the rules. He should not make allegations against another member and a member ought not to impute false or unavowed motives to another member, which in my opinion the member has just done by referring to the member for Durham being in the back pockets of the insurance companies.

I want to say that in my humble opinion the Speaker has an obligation to insist that members refrain from using that type of language. In this particular case it has been repetitive. It has been day after day and I implore you, Mr Speaker, to put an end to it.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Ottawa West is correct that the member for Welland-Thorold has been asked not to make these allegations and I would ask him to withdraw that, if that is the allegation he made.

1740

Mr Kormos: If that is the allegation I made, it is withdrawn.

I read the Toronto Star on Sunday and I read an article from New Zealand. What is happening is, "Environmentalists Raise Stink over Gas from Sheep." There is some significance to this.

Interjections.

Mr Laughren: You're the most sensitive bunch of bandits I ever met.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I also do not feel that calling or referring to members as bandits is very parliamentary, the member for Nickel Belt.

Mr Laughren: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Kormos: Since this is the auto insurance debate, all we want is for the Liberal House leader to stand up and withdraw this crummy, crummy motion and we can all go home.

The problem is that down in New Zealand they have a methane problem from all the sheep. The 60 million sheep of New Zealand turn grass into methane at a rate of almost one million tonnes a year.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The Speaker is having some problems with repeated interjections this afternoon.

Mr McCague: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: There have been references from three members now about "the member for Durham." Could you help me as to who that person would be.

The Deputy Speaker: I am sorry. I did not hear your request.

Mr McCague: I heard three references to the "member for Durham." Could you just point out to me who that is, please.

The Deputy Speaker: I do not understand your request. There is no such riding as Durham, if that is what you want to know.

Mr McCague: That is what I wanted to know. I have heard three members refer to the "member for Durham" and I just wondered who that was.

The Deputy Speaker: There is no riding of Durham per se.

Mr Kormos: The member for Durham Centre should take the Tribune to task then for identifying his riding as Durham. The problem is that some members around here do not make much of an impact in the Legislature, so it is hard to remember who they are.

Getting back to the sheep in New Zealand, I understand that I am speaking only to the time allocation motion brought forward by the government House leader, and I am just doing my part to open up the legislative process for all the citizens of the province, who for one of the first times during the course of this government's trying to impose Bill 68 on them are having their specific concerns voiced here at Queen's Park.

What we have to do, and I have told members this before, is that we have to convince 29 Liberal backbenchers to vote against the time allocation motion, to allow for a full debate. I talked about sheep before and the reason I mention that, Mr Speaker, is that I have to ask you, just how long are these Liberal backbenchers going to allow themselves to be led around like sheep by the insurance companies of the province?

If they insist on following like a herd of sheep they had better be careful, because down in New Zealand the sheep herds are facing hard times. They are a leading cause of methane gas. Mr Speaker, I know that you would not allow me the liberty of comparing the methane gas problem caused by New Zealand sheep to the similar aroma foisted on the public when the rare Liberal backbencher speaks out to protect the sanctity of Bill 68—I know you would not let me make that comparison—or the government's decision to ram this methane-producing time allocation motion through the House, because trust me, they are trying to ram this through the House. We are trying to stop them from ramming it through.

Quite frankly, if the environmentalists in New Zealand think they have methane problems with their sheep, I think some environmentalists here in Ontario should check out the methane problem with these Liberal backbenchers, who indeed are letting themselves be led around like sheep. The environmentalists should look at it seriously. How could any Liberal backbencher actually support this time allocation motion when people from all over Ontario, many of whom were previously lifelong Liberals and Liberal supporters, have taken the time to call me at 965-7714? Those people have gone to great lengths to call me at 965-7714.

They are people like Chuck Bougie who called from Terrace Bay and got his copy of One Hundred Monkeys, like the people who have called and the people who have mailed in. The first person who mails in a torn-up Ontario Liberal membership card is going to get a videotape of today's debate. The 100th torn-up Liberal membership card is going to get his own copy of One Hundred Monkeys. They are calling to say they will never vote Liberal again because of this time allocation motion and because of the Liberal backbenchers' support for Bill 68.

These same people know that there is a methane problem being caused by Liberal backbenchers, the sheep right here at Queen's Park. It is the Liberal backbenchers who insist on following the insurance companies of this province like sheep to a

salt-lick. I am used to seeing these Liberals jump to their feet. I called them jack-in-the-boxes the other day because that is what occasionally happens. You crank them up enough and they will jump to their feet. The problem is that when they start squealing and hollering I feel like the dentist who got close to a nerve, because when I hear these Liberals squeal, I know we are hitting really close to a nerve. We are touching close to the nerve here. Somebody had better get these guys some Novocain. The more these Liberal members squeal—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

M. Pouliot : J'aimerais attirer votre attention et aussi celle, de façon fort sérieuse, des autres collègues, des députés de l'Assemblée législative. Il me semble que sous l'article 20(b) du Règlement, surtout quand il se dit des choses intéressantes, des choses profondes, que l'atmosphère du cirque—broadly summarized, it means the kind of circus atmosphere when profound and important things are being said. People have made it a habit to consistently, deliberately, systematically interrupt the member for Welland-Thorold in this important matter, Mr Speaker. I would ask for your guidance.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Lake Nipigon is repeating a request I have made repeatedly to the members of this House this afternoon. Interjections, no matter where they are coming from, are always out of order.

Mr Pouliot: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your kind help.

Mr Kormos: Mrs E. Budge just phoned in from Weston. She has been watching this afternoon. As a matter of fact, she has been watching since we started this debate on time allocation. She is concerned. She says that the people doing all the squealing and yapping are acting like kindergarten kids, and that is enough to cause her not to vote Liberal next time.

Well, Mrs Budge, it is exactly why the page is going to come here to get this colouring book and crayons to take over to the member for Sudbury, because indeed you are right: They are acting like kids. Perhaps that will keep them occupied a little more effectively than their attention span would let them participate in this very important issue. The crayons are non-toxic, so if he takes to chewing on them nothing really bad is going to happen. He should put them back in the box when he has finished with them so that he does not lose them.

Bob Reynolds from Bobcaygeon called in this afternoon. He does not want no-fault. He says the opposition is doing a wonderful job, that the people of Ontario need this opposition badly. That is exactly why this time allocation motion has to be defeated, because this time allocation motion is all about silencing the opposition, muzzling the opposition.

1750

Allen IteI from Bathurst Street in Toronto calls up. He supports the opposition in its efforts. He says Bill 68 is a terrible bill. He says, take any pains we can to defeat it.

Tim Hutton calls in from the Eglinton area of Toronto. He says he is ashamed, he is ashamed of his Liberal government. He says the insurance companies are making all this money on the backs of motorists.

Darlene Robinson calls from the Toronto area. She says, "Go to it." She says, "Stop the Liberals' time allocation motion and stop Bill 68."

The one thing that people have to be careful of is that when a Liberal member has an opportunity to sit down with them or talk to them or write a letter to them—we went all through that Liberal householder that was full, just chock-full—remember the Liberal householder we went through the other day? We are going to finish up on that householder some time either the end of this week or some time during next week. We are going to work on the householder of the Liberal that told the most incredible things to the people in his riding about Bill 68. No wonder the people of his riding out in Mississauga are cynical about politicians, because they read what that member, the member for Mississauga West, included in his householder, printed at taxpayers' expense, and they say, "My goodness, this is so far from the reality of Bill 68 this is like a fantasy."

That is what happened down in Port Colborne when the Liberal got sent down there to give his fluff speech, unchallenged, untested. That is why they do not want to debate it here at Queen's Park, because they do not want to talk about the billion dollar payday for the auto insurance. They do not want to talk about the billion dollar payday for what is a very profitable auto insurance industry.

Next time we are talking about this, we are going to take a look at the profits of Co-operators Insurance in the year 1989; 1989 was a banner year for Co-operators. They made more money than they know what to do with in 1989, and they made it on the backs of drivers with incredible premium increases. They made it by driving a pickup truck, a dump truck, a Mack truck through the loopholes that exist in the so-called consumer protection legislation of the cap or the freeze that the Liberals tell us they have imposed now. You could drive one of those big Lectra Haul trucks, the kind you can walk underneath to remove the oil plug when you are doing an oil change, you could drive one of those Lectra Hauls through the loopholes that are contained in the Liberals' so-called consumer protection legislation.

When the Liberal member went down to Port Colborne, he did not tell the good people of Port Colborne that Bill 68 is going to mean premium increases of up to 50 per cent in the first year alone, premium increases of up to 50 per cent for drivers here in the province of Ontario. The question to be asked is, how can these Liberals permit their member to purportedly speak about auto insurance to the Rotary club of Port Colborne and conveniently not mention, not whisper one word about a 50 per cent premium increase for drivers in Ontario, up to 50 per cent for each and every driver, and for almost a third of a million of the drivers of Ontario Bill 68 will mean premium increases of up to 80 per cent. This member said absolutely nothing about that when he talked to the Rotary club.

This member said absolutely nothing about the fact that the taxpayer is being forced, by virtue of Bill 68, to subsidize the auto insurance industry in this province to the tune of about \$143 million in the first year alone. When the Liberals are out giving their fluff speeches, why are they not talking about the \$143-million taxpayers' subsidy that is going to be paid to the insurance industry by this Liberal government? Why are they not telling the people in Port Colborne, when they go there to speak at the Rotary club, that the taxpayers' pockets are going to be picked to the tune of \$143 million and that money is going to be handed over to the auto insurance industry?

The members know where the figures come from, some \$95 million, \$96 million, \$97 million, because the auto insurance industry, by virtue of Bill 68, is being relieved of its obligation to pay the three per cent premium tax and that obligation is going to be shifted on to the backs of taxpayers.

Do members know what is even more obscene? Because of what this province is doing to municipalities across Ontario, that burden is going to be shifted on to the backs of property owners in big cities, and indeed in small towns, across the province of Ontario. The Liberals would eliminate the three per cent premium tax and force that tax obligation on to the good, hard-working people, the senior citizens and the students of Ontario.

When Liberals go out and try to talk about auto insurance in their new scheme, they do not mention that. They do not talk about the taxpayer subsidy of the auto insurance industry. They do not talk about the \$46 million that OHIP is going to absorb, and that means a \$46-million drain in the first year alone on our health care system, already badly in need of some resuscitation itself, but another \$46 million being skimmed off our health care system, relieving the auto insurance industry of its obligation to be responsible for the health care obligations and the health care costs of people injured by their drivers—a \$143-million taxpayer subsidy in the first year alone.

But the Liberals do not talk about that when they go to the Rotary club in Port Colborne to talk about auto insurance. They talk about fluff. They make a lot of noise and they say nothing.

They do not talk about the \$823 million that is being skimmed off the backs of innocent injured victims to generate an almost \$1-billion windfall for the auto insurance industry in the first year alone. That is the impact of denying over 95 per cent of all innocent injured victims any right to be compensated for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life. That is going to make a windfall in itself of \$823 million for the auto insurance industry in the first year alone.

The fact is, we are talking about a piece of legislation wherein a drunk driver can get more compensation than his or her victim. A car thief can get more compensation than his or her victim. We are talking about legislation that even the auto insurance industry did not dare ask for when it made its submissions to Osborne a couple of years ago. This government has given the auto insurance industries in this province more than they ever even dared ask for and it is taking it from the taxpayers, drivers and the innocent injured victims to create that windfall, that great big payday.

Let me tell you, Mr Speaker, it does not stop after year one. That \$1-billion windfall, that payday, is just the beginning. That

is year one. There is going to be more of the same in year two, year three, year four, year five.

The auto insurance industry is an extremely powerful and an extremely wealthy industry here in the province of Ontario, and indeed elsewhere. We have talked more than a few times about how we in the New Democratic Party do not get donations from the auto insurance industry and how we are not particularly concerned about it because we do not want to be bought or even rented by that industry. We do not want to be beholden to the auto insurance industry in this province. We are prepared to be able to fight for innocent injured victims, for the taxpayers of Ontario, for the drivers of Ontario, who deserve far better, especially when the Premier of Ontario promised that he had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums.

He said that back three days before the general election in September 1987. He promised a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums, and what does he deliver? A plan that is going to force premiums up by as much as 50 per cent for drivers in Ontario and for a third of a million drivers by as much as 80 per cent.

That is not a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums. That is a very specific plan to enhance the profitability of the auto insurance industry, an industry that is greedy and is as greedy as it ever was, an industry that will gouge and gouge as much as it ever did.

Not only does the auto insurance industry not fund us in our campaigns—it does not fund us in the New Democratic Party—it is not our friend, by any stretch of the word, by any sense of the imagination. They are the friends of the wealthy members of the Liberal caucus, those very same wealthy, powerful insurance companies aligned with wealthy members of the Liberal caucus, a Premier who is a millionaire, a Premier who has never had to concern himself either with making a million bucks, because Lord knows, it was not earned, it was given, but a Premier who has never had to concern himself with where that month's rent or mortgage payment comes from. Maybe it is just a matter of the rich against us. We will keep on fighting back.

On motion by Mr Kormos, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1801.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

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|--|---|
| Adams, Peter (Peterborough L) | Fulton, Ed (Scarborough East L) |
| Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP) | Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L) |
| Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L) | Grandmaître, Bernard C. (Ottawa East L) |
| Beer, Hon Charles , Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs (York North L) | Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP) |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. , Minister of Tourism and Recreation, minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L) | Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L) |
| Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L) | Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP) |
| Bradley, Hon James J. , Minister of the Environment (St Catharines L) | Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC) |
| Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC) | Hart, Hon Christine E. , Minister of Culture and Communications (York East L) |
| Breaugh, Michael J., First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House (Oshawa NDP) | Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L) |
| Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L) | Hošek, Chaviva (Oakwood L) |
| Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP) | Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC) |
| Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L) | Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC) |
| Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L) | Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP) |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor , Minister of Health (Oriole L) | Kanter, Ron (St Andrew-St Patrick L) |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L) | Kerrio, Vincent G. (Niagara Falls L) |
| Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP) | Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L) |
| Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L) | Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP) |
| Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L) | Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L) |
| Collins, Hon Shirley , Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons (Wentworth East L) | Kwinter, Hon Monte , Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L) |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. , Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities, Minister of Skills Development (Renfrew North L) | Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP) |
| Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L) | LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L) |
| Cooke, David S., House leader (Windsor-Riverside NDP) | Leone, Laureano (Downsview L) |
| Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L) | Lipsett, Ron (Grey L) |
| Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC) | Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L) |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC) | MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings L) |
| Cureatz, Sam L., Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House (Durham East PC) | Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP) |
| Curling, Alvin (Scarborough North L) | Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L) |
| Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L) | Mancini, Hon Remo , Minister of Revenue (Essex South L) |
| Dietsch, Michael M. (St Catharines-Brock L) | Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC) |
| Eakins, John F. (Victoria-Haliburton L) | Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP) |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. , Speaker (Perth L) | Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L) |
| Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L) | McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC) |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. , Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Financial Institutions (Bruce L) | McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L) |
| Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L) | McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L) |
| Eves, Ernie L., House leader (Parry Sound PC) | McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC) |
| Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP) | McLeod, Hon Lyn , Minister of Energy, Minister of Natural Resources (Fort William L) |
| Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L) | Miclash, Frank (Kenora L) |
| Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L) | Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L) |
| Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L) | Morin, Hon Gilles E. , Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs (Carleton East L) |
| Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L) | Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste Marie NDP) |
| Fontaine, Hon René , Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L) | Neumann, David E. (Brantford L) |
| | Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L) |
| | Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L) |
| | Nixon, Hon Robert F. , Deputy Premier, Treasurer of Ontario, Minister of Economics (Brant-Haldimand L) |
| | Oddie Munro, Lily (Hamilton Centre L) |
| | Offer, Hon Steven , Solicitor General (Mississauga North L) |
| | O'Neil, Hon Hugh P. , Minister of Mines (Quinte L) |

O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)

Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)

Patten, Hon Richard, Minister of Correctional Services
(Ottawa Centre L)

Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)

Peterson, Hon David R., Premier, President of the Council,
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (London Centre L)

Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)

Phillips, Hon Gerry, Minister of Labour
(Scarborough-Agincourt L)

Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the
Whole House (Prescott and Russell L)

Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)

Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)

Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)

Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)

Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)

Rae, Bob (York South NDP)

Ramsay, Hon David, Minister of Agriculture and Food
(Timiskaming L)

Ray, Michael C. (Windsor-Walkerville L)

Reville, David, chief whip (Riverdale NDP)

Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Riddell, Jack (Huron L)

Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)

Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)

Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)

Scott, Hon Ian G., Attorney General, minister responsible for
native affairs (St George-St David L)

Smith, David W. (Lambton L)

Smith, E. Joan, whip (London South L)

Sola, John (Mississauga East L)

Sorbara, Hon Gregory S., Minister of Consumer and
Commercial Relations (York Centre L)

South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)

Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)

Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)

Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)

Sweeney, Hon John, Minister of Housing, Minister of
Municipal Affairs (Kitchener-Wilmot L)

Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)

Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)

Villeneuve, Noble, chief whip (Stormont, Dundas and
Glengarry PC)

Ward, Hon Christopher C., Minister of Government
Services, government House leader (Wentworth North L)

Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)

Wilson, Hon Mavis, Minister without Portfolio responsible for
women's issues (Dufferin-Peel L)

Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

Wong, Hon Robert C., Minister of Citizenship, minister
responsible for the Ontario Human Rights Commission,
minister responsible for multiculturalism, minister
responsible for race relations (Fort York L)

Wrye, Hon William, Minister of Transportation
(Windsor-Sandwich L)

Vacant, Ottawa South

*Lists of members of the executive council, parliamentary
assistants and members of committees are published in
Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the
first sitting day of each month.*

CONTENTS

Monday 23 April 1990

Members' statements

| | |
|--|------|
| Social service graduates | .689 |
| Mr Kormos | |
| Education financing | .689 |
| Mr Jackson | |
| Native language conference | .689 |
| Mr Neumann | |
| Earth Day | .689 |
| Mrs Grier | |
| Rebecca Jones | .690 |
| Mr Eves | |
| Basketball championships | .690 |
| Mr Campbell | |
| Capital funding for schools | .690 |
| Miss Martel | |
| Earth Day | .690 |
| Mr Jackson | |
| Waste disposal | .691 |
| Mr D. W. Smith | |

Statement by the ministry

| | |
|--|------|
| Temagami district resources | .691 |
| Mrs McLeod | |

Response

| | |
|--|------|
| Temagami district resources | .691 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mrs Marland | |

Oral questions

| | |
|--|------|
| Taxation | .693 |
| Mr Laughren | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Sewage treatment | .693 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mr Peterson | |
| Mrs Marland | |
| Mr Bradley | |
| Cardiovascular care | .695 |
| Mr Eves | |
| Mrs Caplan | |
| Emergency health services | .696 |
| Mr Morin-Strom | |
| Mrs Caplan | |
| Northern development | .696 |
| Mr Villeneuve | |
| Mr Fontaine | |
| Recycling | .697 |
| Mr Kanter | |
| Mr Ward | |

| | |
|--|------|
| Northern travel assistance | .697 |
| Mr Pouliot | |
| Mrs Caplan | |
| Mr Hampton | |
| Toy-lending libraries | .697 |
| Mr Sterling | |
| Mr Beer | |
| Water quality | .698 |
| Mr Tatham | |
| Mr Bradley | |
| Social assistance | .698 |
| Mr Allen | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Highway safety | .699 |
| Mrs Marland | |
| Mr Wrye | |
| Decentralization of government operations | .700 |
| Mr M. C. Ray | |
| Mr Peterson | |

Motion

| | |
|---|------|
| Private members' public business | .700 |
| Mr Ward | |
| Agreed to | .700 |

Petitions

| | |
|---|------|
| French-language services | .700 |
| Mr Polsinelli | |
| Social service graduates | .700 |
| Mr Kormos | |
| Automobile insurance | .701 |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | |
| Academic curriculum | .701 |
| Mrs E. J. Smith | |

Report by committee

| | |
|---|------|
| Standing committee on social development | .701 |
| Mrs O'Neill | |
| Adjourned | .701 |

Government motion

| | |
|---|------|
| Time allocation, motion 30 | .701 |
| Mr Kormos | |
| Adjourned | .718 |

Other business

| | |
|---|------|
| Patricia Starr inquiry | .692 |
| The Speaker | |
| Adjournment | .718 |
| Alphabetical list of members | .719 |

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Le lundi 23 avril 1990

Réponse

| | |
|--|------------|
| Richesses naturelles de la région de Temagami | 691 |
| M. B. Rae | |

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Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 24 April 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le mardi 24 avril 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Languages in Hansard

Hansard reports all debates in English or French as spoken by the participants. It does not translate remarks made in either language. Headings and tables of contents reflect language use.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 24 April 1990

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

Miss Martel: In the past few weeks I have been raising concerns about serious administrative problems at the Workers' Compensation Board. I want to raise another problem today, that of the effects of these internal problems on agencies dealing with the board.

We are finding that many doctors and chiropractors are refusing to treat WCB claimants. Health care providers are tired of having their diagnoses and treatment methods second-guessed by WCB doctors. While attending physicians and chiropractors are treating injured workers, board doctors often deny or overrule their judgements without even examining the patient.

Members of the medical community are also reporting longer-than-ever lapses between the date of injury and acceptance of claims. This is causing tremendous additional anxiety to injured workers who, in turn, are requesting that their physicians become directly involved in dealing with the board on their behalf.

Dr McMillan in Elliot Lake recently summarized the problems as follows: "The increasing workload due to the deficiencies in the system and the extent of my WCB practice is causing a drain in my general practice and surgery. I require extra staff to administer to the WCB problems." It is difficult enough to deal with the board because of the ridiculous amount of paperwork involved. Add to this the months and months of delayed payments due to prolonged decision-making and it is no wonder health care providers are refusing to deal with WCB patients. This problem will result in even further hardships for injured workers. It is time the Minister of Labour responded.

BREAST CANCER

Mr Cousens: York region recently opened the Canadian Women's Breast Cancer Foundation office in the town of Markham. So begins a continuing effort to educate women in our community on the importance of having early screening to detect breast cancer.

Breast cancer is not just a women's issue. When we consider that one in 10 women is a prospective breast cancer victim, it does not take long for men to realize that there are at least 10 women very close to them who are more than statistics. When I consider that the 10 closest women in my life include my mother, my wife, my daughter, my sister and six nieces, statistically it is possible for at least one of them to be affected.

Breast cancer will affect in excess of 12,300 women in Canada this year and it is expected that 4,800 will die of breast cancer. Approximately 1,200 of these women could be saved through early detection. The public needs to be educated more about breast cancer.

Understanding the importance of early detection, the need for self-examination and to know the services that are available in our communities, these simple measures could reduce mortality by 40 per cent for women over the age of 50 and therefore

prevent more than 300 deaths in Ontario per year. We all have a role to play in the breast cancer battle.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

Mr McGuigan: On Sunday, people everywhere celebrated Earth Day. I have been practising a love of this earth and of healthy, productive soil all my adult life. The wise use of this planet and its soil, water and air protects us against poverty, hunger and disease. These elements have the capacity to sustain the earth's population until the millennium.

I, with the Liberal Party, championed soil conservation while in opposition and we have advanced the program in government. As parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food, I held nine meetings across Ontario during the month of March to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the land stewardship and the Ontario soil conservation and environmental protection assistance programs.

My visits reinforced the fact that soil, climate, cropping practices, farming systems and attitudes vary widely across Ontario. There was unanimous support for the involvement of the county soil and crop improvement associations. Those attending exhibited environmental awareness of fertilizer, manure, energy and pesticide use and the downstream effects of soil erosion. Participants recognized that soil degradation is a concern to farmers and to society.

It was an informative experience for myself and the member for Northumberland, who attended eight of the nine meetings. One of those who contributed is in the gallery today: Rick Cowan, a farmer in Essex county and president of the Essex County Federation of Agriculture. I thank Rick and all those who participated in making the initiative so successful.

LANDLORDS' RESTRICTIONS ON PETS

Mr Kormos: I received a letter just the other day from my good friend Bill Thomas. Bill Thomas is well known here in Ontario as a columnist for a variety of newspapers and an author of a number of books of a Leacock quality, the most recent being *The Tabloid Zone—Dancing with the Four-Armed Man* which we will deal with later on.

In any event, Bill Thomas writes to me: "There are few issues in today's society that are so black and white, so right and wrong," that bring naturally with them "attention, sympathy and support. Landlords banning pets from the apartments of the elderly and low-income families has all the charm of big guys with beards beating seal pups to death without the motive of money."

Bill Thomas writes that he does not think anybody can fathom the massive image enhancement that any politician could experience by championing this drive in Ontario and then across Canada. Recent studies "show beyond a doubt that pets keep the elderly alive, give them a purpose, a dependant, a reason to go on. Some hospitals in the United States are encouraging pets to be allowed into the rooms because they can document a speedier recovery if the patient has a dog or a cat to care for."

The reasons that landlords are giving for fighting this highly emotional, very lopsided issue is that pets are noisy and occasionally leave an odour on the carpeting. "Peter," he writes, "if noise and stains on the rug were real social issues, the Station Hotel would have closed down in 1963." He says it is time "to go hard" on this issue; it is "one of the few stances a

politician can take in which he will please everyone." He says he is going to help all he can.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr Harris: Mr Speaker, I rise today to draw your attention to the plight of two rural Ontario areas that are concerned about being a dumping ground for Metropolitan Toronto's waste. I am referring to Plympton township in Lambton county and Marmora township in Hastings county. Both have been identified as interim sites, as if there is any such thing as an interim garbage dump.

Residents feel their concerns are being ignored by the Liberal government. Having met with residents in both areas, I wish to convey a message to the Minister of the Environment. CPAL, Citizens of Plympton Against Landfill, cannot understand why the minister refused to meet with it. I believe the people of southwestern Ontario have a right to know how the minister feels about trucking garbage 200 miles to be dumped on prime agricultural land and the people of Ontario have a right to be heard, so I encourage the minister to come out of the closet and meet with these concerned individuals.

People in Marmora township are equally concerned because their site may not be just interim, but permanent. They cannot understand why the minister refuses to guarantee that a full environmental assessment will be held. Again, I urge the minister to come out from behind closed doors and say where he stands.

Surely government must begin to listen to public concerns about the garbage crisis and to address the need to reduce, reuse and recycle products before they end up in the waste stream. Pitting municipalities and residents against each other is not the answer to Metropolitan Toronto's garbage crisis.

1340

POLLUTION CONTROL

Mr J. B. Nixon: The T-shirt I am wearing today says, "York Mills Collegiate Institute—Earth—Save It." On 22 April, we all know that the 20th annual Earth Day was a great international success. On 18 April, York Mills Collegiate also had a great success. Over 600 students, with teachers and parents, participated in a seven-kilometre walkathon.

In their invitation they said: "Apart from raising money through this event, our main goal is to bring about the awareness in other fellow students and citizens of the harm and damaging effects that pollution has on our trees and on our earth and to make other people, who still do not realize, to be aware of how serious the problem is."

I was proud to participate in the walkathon. Students at York Mills Collegiate succeeded in their aspiration. More people are aware of the damaging and harmful effects of pollution. At least 600 students and their families are aware that humanity depends on a much larger living organism for its survival. We have inherited our responsibility for this planet and we will pass that responsibility to our children. I say that the students of York Mills Collegiate are ready to take that responsibility.

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH LEGISLATION

Mr Reville: A funny thing happened the other day. A person called to ask about the consultation around the community mental health legislation. Naturally, we provided the information. When the person said, "Could you fax that?" we did that too. Here is the funny part. The person was calling from the

office of a government member. That is right. The government was calling the opposition to find out what the government was doing.

I just want to be helpful here. In case there are other government members who want to know what their government is doing, the subcommittee is meeting today and tomorrow in Ottawa; in London on 30 April and 1 May; in Toronto on 9, 10, 16 and 17 May; and in Sudbury on 28 and 29 May. I am very sorry, they have missed Hamilton, Kingston and Thunder Bay.

I do have a request of my own, Mr Speaker. Do not tell anybody I told the House this. Helping the government out is very bad for my image.

PENETANGUISHENE MENTAL HEALTH CENTRE

Mr McLean: My statement is for the Minister of Health and it concerns approximately 13 unclassified workers at Oak Ridge. That is the division of the Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre.

These people were hired on a temporary contract basis, pending the recruitment of qualified nursing staff. The institution is currently trying to recruit registered nurses and registered nursing assistants and the 13 unclassified workers are to be terminated on 24 June 1990.

Many of the workers have received numerous letters of recognition with respect to patient assaults on nursing staff in which they were praised for being instrumental in preventing a very serious accident. They have also been praised for their performance on the job and for the high standard of care they provide at Oak Ridge.

I would suggest to the minister that these people are valuable assets at this institution and, rather than making them join the unemployment lines, she should be retraining them as registered nurses and registered nursing assistants. I would urge her to do so. How would she feel if she worked at one place for over five years and was told that her services were no longer required after receiving many letters of a good work record? I ask the minister to look into the layoffs at Oak Ridge and to do something about them.

GREAT RIDE AGAINST CANCER

Mrs E. J. Smith: Twenty years ago the London area started what has now become a great tradition in the city of London, the Great Ride Against Cancer. This has become a family event in which individuals and families get out together and bicycle a long course for this good cause.

In 1990 this has spread throughout many communities of southwestern Ontario. Over 10 now have their own ride against cancer.

This ride not only raises good money for research in the cancer area but also serves as a tool for educating people about the disease itself. People are encouraged to learn about it and to watch for the symptoms so that they can take immediate action. They also learn of the high rate of cure that has developed as a result of research money raised by such things as these bicycle rides. This high rate of cure in itself encourages people to come forward and go to their doctors at the first sign of cancer.

I would encourage all people to sponsor riders and to get out and ride themselves. People might like to start it in their own communities as well. I compliment the people of London who have organized it.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr Mackenzie: I have a question for the Deputy Premier. Today we hear that Stelco Inc will cut some 800 jobs and close some operations due to a deteriorating economic situation. Jay Gordon, steel analyst with McLean McCarthy Ltd, is quoted as saying, "Further employment cuts depend on how bad the economic cycle gets, and it is beginning to shape up as a really nasty one." Can the Deputy Premier tell us if this government's response to this economic crisis will be more effective than its fight against free trade?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I read with great concern the stories in the press relating to the problems that the steel industry is having. The federal policy of high interest rates, which has triggered the relatively high value of the Canadian dollar, has had a very substantial negative effect on our economy to the point where we are now projecting in Ontario real growth of 1.7 per cent.

Just in December when I tabled the grey book of economic projections for this calendar year, we were expecting growth of two per cent, and we predicted a decrease in interest rates of two per cent over the year. Unfortunately that does not appear to be happening and we are very concerned about it as well. I may have a chance to continue the discussion in a moment.

Mr Allen: If we are looking at troubled times in steel and autos, a lot of smaller suppliers are going to be in trouble as well. As the Treasurer may know, the Premier's Council was to report in April on employment adjustment policies dealing with severance, training and other closure and layoff problems. Now it would appear, as reports have it, that the inadequacy of recommendations in that initial report have delayed the report substantially.

Can the Treasurer tell us when that report will be available and whether it will be responding fully to workers' needs for comprehensive adjustment services regardless of scale of closure and layoff and so on?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I cannot give the honourable member specific information in either area although I am a member of the council and have been participating in the discussions on both subjects which are very important. Certainly the expressions from the two Hamilton members about the state of the economy as it is reflected by the steel companies is significant. I think it is important that Ontario maintain its competitive stand and a situation where these industries can be in a position to continue real growth and the concomitant employment.

There will be references of a somewhat general nature in the address I will be delivering to the House later this afternoon but I believe that the interest rate situation—which most people had expected to moderate by this time in the year—as it gets worse is having a continuing difficult effect. There is not much we can do about that, other than to bring in our own programs to moderate it and give gratuitous advice to the federal government.

1350

Mr Charlton: The reflection of economic circumstances which are represented in this question reflect more than just problems in the steel industry. Mr Gordon said Stelco's loss in the first quarter came because Detroit screwed up on a scale that boggles the imagination, which resulted in losses of market share to the Japanese. We add to that the lack of economic, financial and employment planning coming out of this govern-

ment and we are heading into a situation that is particularly destructive.

We need specific policy comment and assurance from this government that as a result of what is going on out there in the economy, workers will not be the ones who get left to pay the heaviest price. What programs is the Deputy Premier going to proceed with?

Hon R. F. Nixon: There are a variety of programs now to assist in situations where there are layoffs. I think the honourable member would be aware that our projections are for a net increase in jobs in the province this year of something over 60,000.

Mr Pouliot: You just said you were way off in your projections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Boy, I certainly appreciate my friend from the north because he is so helpful in these matters.

I sincerely hope that the initiatives the government takes in the future will have the enthusiastic support of the representatives of the New Democratic Party, which are really a part of what they are saying in their questions now. Even the Premier's Council, in making recommendations for training and assisting the workforce in responding in a useful and flexible way to changing requirements, is something that I wait for with a good deal of anticipation because I believe it will be very useful.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr D. S. Cooke: I have a question to the Minister of Housing. The Minister of Housing is quoted as saying in the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations Bulletin, produced here in Toronto for winter 1990, that the cost of putting housing on the market in Toronto, with the land cost, construction costs and material costs, results in a monthly rent of at least \$1,200 to \$1,300 a month and that not many people in Toronto can afford that kind of rental cost on a monthly basis.

If in fact that is his position, which I certainly agree with, that not many people can afford that, why, for the purposes of his housing policy statement to provide 25 per cent of the units going on the market as being affordable, is his definition of "affordable" a monthly rent in Toronto of \$1,320; in Windsor, \$1,170; in Hamilton, \$1,180? And the list goes on. Why would that be his definition of "affordable," when he himself understands that for the people who need housing, that is not affordable?

Hon Mr Sweeney: The original reference that the honourable member alludes to was in response to an observation that developers have given to me as to the reason why they were not building rental accommodation in the city. I concurred with them and I concur with the honourable member. The honourable member will be well aware of the fact that the affordable housing range is from zero to the 60th percentile. The figures that he alludes to are at the 60th percentile. A limited number of people are at that range and many, many more people are below that. That is just referring to that 60th percentile figure. It does not refer to the 20th, the 30th, the 40th or the 50th. That is why we have our non-profit program. That is why, when we recently announced Seaton, I indicated that it would not be good enough to have them just at the 60th; they would have to have them at those other percentiles as well.

Mr D. S. Cooke: When the minister comes up with a definition that goes up to the 60th percentile and that is the

requirement the municipalities must meet, then obviously the requirement he is setting is something that any municipality can achieve by building anything in its municipality. The private sector is going to respond to the highest possible level and therefore there will be no development of affordable housing in this province for those people who are at the 30th percentile or the 10th percentile, the people who need housing.

In fact, in a survey that was conducted in Ottawa by CMHC, of the 62,000 units surveyed, only 484 were over \$1,000 per month currently, so just about all the units in Ottawa would already meet his guidelines. How does the minister plan on getting affordable housing on the market if he has opted out of the co-op and non-profit program and this is his tool? How is he going to get permanently affordable housing on the market?

Hon Mr Sweeney: It is incorrect for my colleague to suggest that we have opted out of the co-op and non-profit program. As a matter of fact, we will be allocating something just below 10,000 units this year, and we will continue to be allocating as we have for the last several years. He knows those figures as well as I do, and they are going to continue.

But speaking specifically of Ottawa, as my honourable colleague just did, the staff of the housing advocacy group within our ministry recently appeared before the Ontario Municipal Board to argue in support of a private developer who was prepared to bring on stream housing that would have been in between the 20th and 30th percentiles. A local community group objected to that. Our staff went to support it and in fact the Ontario Municipal Board did support that.

Not very long ago, in North York, another proposal was brought forward to provide housing in the 40th percentile, and again our task force went before the OMB. Once again, the OMB supported it. So I think that there is evidence—I can give others, but those are just two—that housing is being built at considerably below the 60th percentile, and supported.

Mr D. S. Cooke: As of February of this year there were 41,274 households representing about 71,000 people on waiting lists for assisted housing in this province, there is a one- to two-year waiting list to get in co-ops and, across Ontario, there are about 200,000 households of people who are caught up with paying more than 30 per cent per month for their housing or doubling up and living with other households.

If the minister is interested in providing affordable housing, why does he not change the definition of what affordable is and make it mandatory to provide 25 per cent of the units at the 30th percentile level or lower so that we really are aiming affordable housing at the people who desperately need it in this province?

Hon Mr Sweeney: The honourable member is aware of the fact that whether we are talking about the affordable percentage for private lands or for government lands, the figures that are referred to are the minimums. In other words, as I have gone around to speak to municipal councils and to speak to developers and builders, we have made that very, very clear.

For example, on our provincial government lands, the minimum figure is 35 per cent, and yet with only one exception, every single piece of government land we have brought on stream in the last year and a half has had in fact between 50 and 60 per cent affordable. So the minimum figures are not the ones that are actually being adhered to; figures much higher than that are being adhered to.

COURT SYSTEM

Mr Harris: I have a question for the Attorney General. Last year Judge Borins dismissed a case against four men charged with drug trafficking because it took three and a half years to come to trial. The judge said an overburdened justice system had deprived these accused drug dealers of their rights. An Oshawa judge recently dismissed five criminal cases for the same reason. The same thing has been happening in Algoma district and in Ottawa-Carleton. Trial dates have to be set at least six or seven months in advance. Major cases such as murder take longer. In fact, a recent survey found Ontario's courts are the slowest of any jurisdiction in all of North America. How can the Attorney General tell us that justice is being served when accused criminals are walking free because of court delays?

Hon Mr Scott: First of all, it is very important to separate out the case to which the honourable member refers, which was a drug case tried in district court, because as the honourable member will know, as he goes about the province in his desperate search for telephone-in supporters, those cases are tried in a court which is provided by the province but in which the judges are federally appointed and the prosecutors are federally appointed. So the delays that we see most commonly in the drug cases are delays, as they were in Judge Borins's court, for which the province has no responsibility. A very careful examination of the Borins case illustrates that there was no shortage of courtroom facilities in that case; there was a shortage of federally appointed judges.

Having said that, however, it would be less than candid to concede that we do not have significant delays in the provincial court. There are probably 10 districts out of the 100-odd in Ontario where the delays exceed acceptable levels as far as I am concerned. These delays have been growing significantly over a decade. The good news that I am able to report to the honourable member is that in six of those districts, we have established delay reduction committees which, as the Court of Appeal noted last week in the Morin case, are beginning to take hold and beginning to respond to what is a very difficult problem.

Delay in the court cannot be solved by a government or an Attorney General. It is a shared problem—

1400

The Speaker: Thank you. Perhaps there might be a supplementary and you can add something further then.

Mr Harris: I appreciate the Attorney General's concern about my travels around the province and assure him that it is his record as Attorney General that makes my job much easier as I travel this province.

Interjection.

Mr Harris: The Attorney General says it is not his fault.

Last Friday five people accused in a \$50-million drug conspiracy here in Toronto were freed because the case took more than three years to come to trial. One of the accused is reported to have gone to court 44 times. The biggest delay centred on the fact that it took 14 months for the crown, for whom the Attorney General is responsible, to bring a completed indictment to the court, something that the defence attorney says usually takes 10 minutes.

These are serious charges. We are talking about \$50 million. We are talking about a ton of hash. We are talking about an international conspiracy. How can the Attorney General defend

his failure to have this case come to trial, with a 14-month delay for something that usually takes 10 minutes?

Hon Mr Scott: If the honourable member listens as carefully to those telephone calls as he listens to me, he is not going to know who wins this leadership race by the time it is over.

As I have tried to explain to the honourable member as carefully as I could, the cases of drug prosecutions have to be removed from the consideration that the honourable member addresses, particularly the one to which he refers, because those cases are tried in federally appointed courts and they are prosecuted by crown attorneys who are local appointees of the Mulroney government. The cases are not tried by provincial judges and they are not tried by representatives of the provincial Attorney General's ministry.

It is our obligation to provide courtrooms for the utilization of those trials. I have carefully examined those trials in each instance and I have not found that there has been any shortage of courtroom space. As the honourable member knows, the Provincial Auditor reported six months ago that in the courthouse where most of these trials take place, the courthouse on University Avenue, occupancy is at about 60 per cent. There is plenty of courtroom space in the district court to try those cases. If there is a shortage either of federal crown attorneys or federally appointed judges, the honourable member, when he gets his Senate seat, will know where to raise the matter.

Mr Harris: I am amazed that the Attorney General washes his hands of everything that is going wrong in this province. Setting accused drug dealers free without a trial is a strange way of dealing with a problem.

How about insurance rates? Last November, York region judges threw out 60 impaired driving charges because of delays. How about child abuse? Family court backlogs have reached a point where those with temporary custody often win by default, yet we had more family court judges in 1979 than we do today. He has had five years as Attorney General to deal with this problem and he has failed miserably.

Does he not realize how frustrating, how discouraging this situation is for the police and how encouraging it is for criminals? When can we expect the minister to take a lead role so that we can see a plan in place to have an improvement in this very discouraging situation?

Hon Mr Scott: Should I try to explain this one more time? As I have said to the honourable member, in respect to drug cases, the provision of judges is achieved by the federal government and the prosecutors are appointed by the federal government. Our responsibility is to provide courtroom space and court reporters, and that we do.

When it comes to impaired driving, we accept responsibilities for delays that are a decade old in this province. We have established a program, which the Treasurer has kindly funded, which allows the participants in the trial process—the judge, the administrator, our crown attorney and members of the defence bar—to consult about how the process can be speeded up in their community.

That process, called the delay reduction committee, is critical because no one player can take the decisions. The honourable member will be interested to know that a five-man Court of Appeal, in allowing an appeal from a stay of prosecution, referred with approval to the efforts that the government had made and allowed the appeal, as I say, and remitted the case to trial.

The difficulty is a serious one. We are attending to it as carefully as we can. We are getting the best possible advice

about how the system, which is composed of independent players, can more effectively respond. But you know, if the member ever thought who caused this problem—

The Speaker: Order. New question.

HOSPITAL FINANCING

Mr Eves: I have a question of the Minister of Health. I am sure the minister is aware of the deficit problems of the Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital, projecting a deficit this year of some \$6 million, \$2.5 million of which is a shortfall carried over from the last fiscal year and some of which is implementing a rationalization agreement which it signed with St Mary's General Hospital last May and the minister concurred to.

Hon Mrs Caplan: I am very familiar with the issue that the member raises. I have met with some of the hospitals from that region and I am aware that they are working very closely with the ministry to resolve any outstanding issues.

Mr Eves: How does the minister rationalize, for lack of a better word, or take that statement she just made, that she is working with the two hospitals, when I am sure she is aware that the Waterloo District Health council recently talked about a progress report. As part of that progress report review, they are concerned that some of the essential proposals and rationalization that she agreed to last May—and they have not received any word about being held up—include the following four: no CAT scanner for St Mary's hospital; no response from the ministry to Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital's request for money to consolidate and expand its kidney dialysis service; no approval from the ministry to renovate St Mary's emergency department, considered an immediate need and agreed upon by all, including the ministry, and not enough space in St Mary's for small operating rooms to do intricate orthopaedic surgical procedures.

Why is it that even though the minister agreed to all of these things being done, and this rationalization last May, almost a year ago now, the ministry has not provided the funds for these hospitals to streamline their processes and rationalize their services?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I would like to compliment the Waterloo District Health Council for the leadership role it has played in bringing the hospitals together and working together.

I can tell the member that many of the issues he raises relate to the kind of new program opportunities that are always being discussed by the ministry but that, in fact, in the Waterloo region, the local member, my colleague the member for Kitchener, has been very vigilant in ensuring that I am fully aware of the concerns of the hospital and the community. I want to assure the member opposite that we are working with both of the hospitals to ensure, as part of a review of their services, that the needs of the people of Kitchener-Waterloo are met and met appropriately.

1410

Mr Eves: I am glad the minister refers to the member for Kitchener, because the same member for Kitchener is quoted in the Kitchener-Waterloo Record on 4 April as saying, "Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital is in the same position as about 15 other hospitals in the province who are reporting a deficit."

He is very concerned, as well he should be, about the fact that despite the fact her ministry committed to this rationalization process and to these specific needs in both these hospitals almost a year ago now—next month it will be a year—they still have not seen any funding forthcoming to provide CAT scan-

ners, kidney dialysis, redoing the emergency room and expanding emergency facilities so they can do critical care orthopaedic surgery.

The minister is the one who stood in this House and made a statement in August 1988 that said there will not be this problem with funding hospitals any more as a result of the Conjoint Review Committee's report, "We will undertake upon the ministry to get you funding and get you answers on programs immediately." Why has the minister not done that? How can this situation exist two years after she solved the problem?

Hon Mrs Caplan: The member opposite is putting words in my mouth that are simply not correct, and he is once again not presenting factual information to this House.

The rationalization attempt between the two hospitals in fact had no cost implications. As a result of that there were some requests for new programs. I can tell him as well that there have been some funding problems that arose in one of the hospitals. We are now working with both hospitals to review their needs and ensure that the needs of the people of Kitchener-Waterloo are met.

He knows as well, or should know, that we are reviewing policy guidelines in such areas as CAT scanners. We are also looking at expansion of regional dialysis programs. I want him to know that active planning is under way, but that he is wrong, as usual.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

Mr Wildman: I have a question of the Minister of Labour regarding the administrative snafus that are becoming more and more endemic at the Workers' Compensation Board.

How can the minister justify the fact that delays in decisions by the Workers' Compensation Board have resulted in delays not only for the injured workers who are hurt by this but for the pharmacies that have supplied injured workers with the medication prescribed for them, to the point that some pharmacies in Algoma district have not been paid as far back as July 1989 and some have a few outstanding accounts from before that?

These delays are just not acceptable. What is the minister going to do to try and straighten out the administrative screw-ups at the Workers' Compensation Board?

Hon Mr Phillips: I am aware of the challenges at the Workers' Compensation Board. I know that the member for Sudbury East has raised those with me as well. I have talked to the chairman and the chief executive officer of the Workers' Compensation Board. I think the first thing is that they acknowledge they have been implementing a substantial amount of change there. They acknowledge that they have had some problems in implementing that change. They acknowledge that they need to make improvements in it. The second thing I would say is that the board, which has the responsibility for ensuring there is a smooth operation of workers' compensation, is also aware of the need to improve the service.

I will just say that they are implementing substantial change. They believe, and I believe they are right, that when they get this change implemented, it will represent an improvement in service at the Workers' Compensation Board. There is no question that over the last three to four months, as all that change has come together, service levels at the Workers' Compensation Board have not been what I think they should be and not been what the board thinks they should be.

I am satisfied that they are aware of it. I am satisfied that they are attempting to correct it. I am satisfied that the board is

looking at plans to improve it. The expectation from the Workers' Compensation Board is that should improve over the near term.

Miss Martel: I wish that was correct, but I doubt it. Let me tell the minister how serious the problem is.

Several weeks ago the Sudbury District Pharmacists' Association asked for a meeting with the regional director of the Workers' Compensation Board in Sudbury to try and resolve some of the problems my colleague has pointed out. The regional director refused to meet with them, and instead sent some lower-level management staff who of course could not resolve any of the problems. As a result of all their frustrations in dealing with the board, the association, which represents some 40 pharmacies in Sudbury and district, has proposed that it will no longer deal with injured workers and their claims. As of 1 May, injured workers who come in to pick up prescriptions have to pay up front in cash.

Everyone in this House knows that injured workers who are already on lower benefits because they are on compensation cannot afford to have to pay hundreds and hundreds of dollars per month for prescriptions either. I want to ask the minister, what is he going to do to protect these workers?

Hon Mr Phillips: Again, there is a fine line for the minister, as I am sure the opposition appreciates, between ensuring that the service levels of the Workers' Compensation Board are fair and adequate and the minister's stepping in and becoming part of the administration of it. I am trying to walk that fine line.

I have raised the concerns about the service levels with the board, and it is not just the concerns of the opposition; it is the concerns of my own members on this side. I repeat that the board is aware of them and the board is taking action to correct them. Specific instances, such as the member has raised, I will once again raise with the board because I do not think any of the members would want an injured worker not to have proper service. So I am raising those issues.

I would ask the members to recognize that change is substantial at the board. They believe that they are working their way through that change and that the net result will be a substantial improvement in service. As the minister, I am continuing to monitor it and to raise the concerns other members bring to me. In terms of the specifics of the case of the pharmacies in Sudbury, I will raise that too.

TOURISM

Mr McLean: My question is for the Minister of Tourism and Recreation. It concerns the disturbing decline in Ontario tourism since he became minister. According to Tourism Ontario, this province's tourism revenue dropped \$3.25 billion in 1989 from the previous year and the equivalent of 30,000 full-time jobs have been lost. Trips by Ontario residents within this province declined by 27.8 per cent last year, while the number of Ontarians visiting the United States increased by 38.4 per cent during the same period. This resulted in Ontario's share of the \$3.5-billion national travel deficit climbing to 57 per cent.

What immediate steps is the minister going to take to ensure that Ontario's third largest employer, the tourism and hospitality industry, regains its strength?

Hon Mr Black: I would like to welcome the member for Simcoe East back to the House. I expected that question yesterday. Unfortunately, he was not here.

Mr Cousens: Oh, what a nasty response. Come on. What are you doing? This is just insolence. Throw him out, Mr Speaker. More respect for the House.

Mr Campbell: If you can't take the heat, get out.

Mrs Marland: No, you've got it wrong. It's you who can't take the heat.

Mr Cousens: There's no honour among this group.

Mrs Marland: This member has been here every day and you haven't been here.

Mr Cousens: He works hard in his community. Why don't you give him some response with some integrity?

Interjections.

Mr Cousens: Talk about attendance, Mr Speaker. You're always here doing a good job.

Hon Mr Wrye: You're always here, Don.

Hon Mr Scott: You're always here, Don.

Mr Cousens: But he isn't, though, Mr Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I know the former Deputy Chairman is aware of the rules and I am sure he wants to make certain that everyone has an opportunity to speak and be heard.

Mr Jackson: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: According to Beauchesne's rule 316 on page 103: "It has been sanctioned by usage that a member, while speaking, must not (c) refer to the presence or absence of specific members." I would respectfully ask the minister to withdraw his comment.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member has raised a point of order and I will respond to the honourable member. He is correct in quoting that. I have advised all members in the House on previous occasions that it is up to them whether they attend or do not attend, and it is not up to other members to draw their attention to that.

1420

Hon Mr Black: Mr Speaker, I would like to withdraw my remark and offer a sincere apology to the member for Simcoe East.

Now, if I may, I would like to try to respond to his original question. I should point out to the member that there has indeed been a slowdown in the number of US visitors to Ontario during the past year and a very significant slowdown in the number of people within Ontario who travel within their own province. That is in fact a matter of great concern to both the tourism industry and my ministry. We have been looking at it and analysing very carefully all the factors that contribute to that.

I know the member would want to know, however, that there are other factors than just the role of the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation that may be involved. Marketing programs are partnership programs; they are partnerships between the federal government, the provincial government and the tourism industry itself. So all the partners in that enterprise have a share of the responsibility for effective marketing of their programs.

Mr McLean: I am sure the average 10 per cent increase in the revenues has something to do with it. However, how can the

minister defend running a four-page travel ad in a US newspaper highlighting Toronto, Ottawa, Niagara Falls and other southern Ontario points of interest with virtually no information on northern Ontario? It appears to me that the minister is not aware northern Ontario exists and has much to offer visitors. There is a lot there to offer. How does he defend the lack of interest in northern Ontario?

Hon Mr Black: If I could respond to the member for Simcoe East, I would suggest to him first of all that he should look at the ad in question and satisfy himself that the facts he has quoted are correct, because if one looks at the ad that was placed in USA Today, one would find that fully one third of that insert featured northern Ontario products. It featured the lodges of northern Ontario, the resorts of northern Ontario and the kinds of activities, such as hunting and fishing, that are prevalent in northern Ontario.

I would also point out to the member that half of our radio commercials for our spring-summer campaign, which is just starting now, in fact focus on the soft wilderness experiences that are offered in northern Ontario. I know that the member will be pleased to know that.

I should also tell him that we have just recently completed a targeted direct mail program to some 410,000 people who reside in the northeastern United States that specifically talks about fishing and hunting opportunities in northern Ontario. This ministry and this government are providing more support to tourism in northern Ontario than at any time in the history of this province.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr McGuigan: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. The report of the Provincial-Municipal Social Services Review identified among the key municipal concerns that there has been an unequal impact of costs from municipality to municipality.

When my riding extended to Elgin county, I learned that Elgin did not subsidize people in rest homes for the very plausible reason that there were a large number of discharged patients from the Ontario psychiatric hospital at St Thomas and, because they had no other home, even though they were originally from many parts of Ontario, they took up residence in local rest homes.

This put an inordinate cost on the county of Elgin. Then because Elgin cut off funding at some time, these people moved to the nearby counties of Kent, Middlesex, Oxford and Haldimand-Norfolk. My question to the minister is, when does he expect to address this particular inequity between municipalities?

Hon Mr Beer: The honourable member has raised an issue that has caused concern in a number of areas of the province. I think that is one of the specific reasons we launched the Provincial-Municipal Social Services Review, which was to look at the funding and management of a number of social programs, including general welfare assistance. As the honourable member may be aware, that report was released earlier this month and there is a six-month consultation period now under way with the municipalities and other interested groups.

I would also point out to the honourable member that the long-term care initiative is going through a similar six-month consultative process and there are many things with respect to the specific question the member raises that are linked in the two. I would hope very much that at the end of this study and discussion with municipalities, we would then be able to bring

forward proposals that would mean that the kind of situation the honourable member refers to would not occur again.

Mr McGuigan: Recently the Kent county council cut off subsidy funding for welfare recipients in rest homes because it claims that 31 per cent of them are not county residents even though some have been residing there for 15 years. I am concerned about the fate of these people. They are frail and elderly and many are ex-alcoholics unable to care for themselves. Also the ex-alcoholics do not need to be in nursing homes or hospitals; they are difficult to handle and can best be cared for in rest homes.

The alternative when these rest homes go broke—one has already closed—is the street. What steps can be taken to help these people until the day when the proposed reforms can be implemented?

Hon Mr Beer: I would say that I regret very much the action that the Kent county council recently took. We are speaking of, I believe, approximately 20 out of some 58 people who are in this particular situation. The council is aware of the process we have launched around the Provincial-Municipal Social Services Review and long-term care. It would be my hope that they would rescind their decision or defer it until we have had a chance to complete these specific discussions. I have asked my officials to enter into discussions with Kent county council to see if there is not some way we can get around this particular situation.

As the honourable member points out, our concern here has to be with the individuals who need to be in the hostels. We want to ensure that they have a safe and secure place where they can remain after 30 June. So we are going to begin those discussions and I would hope very much that the council would reconsider its decision.

WINDSOR AREA ECONOMY

Mr D. S. Cooke: I have a question to the Minister of Labour. First of all, I would like to ask the minister if he is aware of the plant closure, which was announced last Friday afternoon in Windsor, of the Wayne Bus Body company, better known in Windsor as Welles Corp Ltd. The minister will know that this is one of many plant closures that have been announced in my community in the last few months. This one will result in 150 employees being laid off. This company has received \$1 million in a loan from the Ontario Development Corp. What intervention has been made by his government at this point in an attempt to save these jobs?

Hon Mr Phillips: We are always terribly concerned about any layoff. As the Treasurer said earlier today in the House, the fact that we are seeing high interest rates makes it somewhat more difficult for our industries to compete against the United States. We have been fortunate over the last six years in that we have been able to see jobs created in the province at a substantially faster rate than the labour market has grown, so the unemployment rate has been able to drop.

Specifically in instances like this where we see a case of a plant closure, our involvement is to ensure that severance and termination pay are handled, that if the decision for the plant to close is made we have employment counselling help for those individuals, that we work with the federal government to ensure training is made available and that we assist the workers to find new jobs.

As we look across the province, we are seeing a number of layoffs. In each of those cases our ministry will step in with our

counselling services to work with both the employees and the employer to assist those workers in finding new careers.

Mr D. S. Cooke: It might be quite difficult to find a job in Windsor when the unemployment rate is 13 per cent. The minister will have to come in and pick up the pieces, but what I was asking him is if he is prepared to intervene and use his \$1 million that has been lent to this company through the Ontario Development Corp to try to save the jobs.

The minister might be aware that what this company has said is that besides closing its manufacturing operations in Windsor, it might leave a sales office to access the Canadian market. It is clear that one of the contributing factors to this plant closure is the free trade agreement which his government did not do a damned thing to stop in this country.

The Speaker: And the question?

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Interjections.

1430

The Speaker: Are you all finished now? I asked the member to place a supplementary. Would you place it?

Mr D. S. Cooke: Yes, I will place it. I should like to ask the minister whether he or the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology will intervene in an attempt to save these jobs. We do not need them to come in and pick up the pieces after. With 13 per cent unemployment in my community, we need to prevent this plant closure.

Hon Mr Phillips: I would just like to correct the record. I was extremely proud of our Premier in terms of fighting the battle on free trade. If you look in the last federal election, it was our Premier, almost alone across this country, who continued to speak out about the problems that the free trade agreement would cause. He alone did that with great, great effect.

In terms of how we work with organizations, as I said before, MITT is always looking for opportunities to save jobs. For example, I know that both the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology and myself met recently with General Motors and the Canadian Auto Workers, talking about the future of the van plant in Scarborough.

However, there is no sense in holding out false hope. MITT would certainly like to work with organizations to save those jobs, but in the case where jobs are designated to leave, our ministry, the Ministry of Labour, will step in to provide the maximum assistance that we can for those workers, whether it be in counselling, whether it be ensuring that they receive their severance, their termination pay, whether it be ensuring for training and what not. That is the role that we will play. I know MITT would be happy to work with organizations if there is an opportunity for that business to be saved.

TAXATION

Mr Jackson: I have a question for the Minister of Revenue. On 22 March, the Windsor Star reported that the minister ardently supports a tax freeze in Ontario. The minister was quoted as saying on that day: "It would be unwise and very politically dangerous for any government to be introducing any new taxes at this time. The public is fed up with taxes in Ontario." Would the Minister of Revenue inform this House whether he has been able to impress upon the Treasurer the fact

that his ministry does not need additional revenue in this budget?

Hon Mr Mancini: The Treasurer of Ontario is a very wise political person, and he will be giving us his budget today at four o'clock. I am sure that the member will be here to listen.

Mr Jackson: I am sure that the member for Essex South and his constituents were quite delighted to hear that, for the first time in six Liberal budgets, he has come out so strongly, so clearly, so unequivocally against and in opposition to any new taxes in Ontario.

Would the minister explain to his constituents in Essex South and to the members of this House why he voted against a resolution calling on the government to freeze taxes on the very same day that he was making that statement in the Windsor Star? How can he be for a tax freeze in Windsor and opposed to it at Queen's Park on the same day?

Hon Mr Mancini: There has been a long tradition in the Legislature for members to look over private bills that have been introduced by other members in the House, and for an obvious number of reasons, I was unable to support the honourable member's resolution. Had he given his resolution more thought and had it been more practical and had it been more acceptable to the House, he might have got the support of the House.

CHILD CARE

Mr Daigeler: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Recently, one of my constituents wrote that he knew of people who contribute over \$600 a month to their registered retirement savings plans to reduce their income so they could still qualify for child care subsidy.

In earlier correspondence to me, the minister had indicated that 80 per cent of the people receiving subsidized day care have an annual income of less than \$20,000. My constituent appreciates that, but he still wonders about the remaining 20 per cent.

Can the minister tell this House whether there are any checks in the system to prevent people from using RRSP contributions so as to qualify for subsidized day care or whether these cases that I mentioned are very isolated across the province?

Hon Mr Beer: I would want to state very clearly that those people who receive subsidies for child care in this province are indeed those who are most in need. As part of the process by which someone becomes eligible for a child care subsidy there is a needs test, and part of that is what is called liquid assets, determining what other assets besides some income an individual may have, and there is a limit on that.

For example, a single mother with one child could have liquid assets—and by that we mean savings; it could include an RRSP—with a limit of \$5,000. If that asset is more than that amount, then that individual is automatically no longer eligible for child care. So in the case of the specific example that the honourable member mentioned, that could not hold true for a single mother with one child.

There are very clear sets of rules and regulations around exactly how an individual receives the subsidy, and I can assure the honourable member that very, very few people, if any, are able to pass through that system and somehow take money from the system they should not have.

Mr Daigeler: I appreciate that there apparently are clear checks in the system to make sure that the purpose for which this program is set is used by the people who benefit from it.

In the context of looking at these day care questions, I found out that the minister is presently reviewing the ministry's New Directions for Child Care plan, which was set up some three or four years ago by his predecessor. Can the minister inform this House as to when the review that I think he is presently undertaking will be complete and when he will be announcing his own day care plans for the next three years?

Hon Mr Beer: As the honourable member has said, we have completed the three-year cycle that was announced in 1987 and we are preparing our plans for the ensuing period. As the honourable member knows, the recent federal budget has caused a number of problems in looking at budgets for a number of social service programs that we have, including child care, but I would hope to be in a position to inform the House of our plans in the very near future.

EDUCATION OF DISABLED

Mr R. F. Johnston: My question is for the Minister of Education. Two years ago, in May 1988, in response to a question from the member for Nepean, the then Minister of Education indicated that he hoped to be bringing forward amendments to Bill 82 prior to the end of that session regarding children with exceptionalities. That was May 1988. A month or so ago, again the member asked a question of this minister, and this minister had the gall to say that we would expect those amendments before the assembly sitting this fall of this year.

It is really quite amazing to me. I would ask the minister how it is that he can stand up and face the parents of disabled kids across this province, who have been lobbying us systematically since 1987 for those changes. How can he stand up now and tell them that again they are supposed to believe him and that they are going to wait until next fall for amendments that are grossly needed?

1440

Hon Mr Conway: I want to indicate to my friend the member for Scarborough West that I did indicate, in response to a request in this regard from my friend the member for Nepean, that it was my expectation that I would be bringing forward those amendments in the fall sitting of this year. I regret that we were not able to do it last fall, for example, but as my friend will know, we had a couple of education bills that were in train at that time, the teachers' pension legislation and the pooling legislation, that took up a fair bit of time. But like my friend opposite, and certainly like my colleagues in the government caucus, I am determined to move forward to address the concerns that have been identified, and I look forward in a very positive way to working with my friend from Scarborough later this year to address these long-awaited amendments.

Mr R. F. Johnston: My problem is that I expected through the other minister, in conversations with him, that it would be provided a couple of years ago. I expected from this minister that it would be coming forward last fall. The first work on those amendments was done in 1986 and 1987. Both ministers have referred to that process in the past.

I want to know from the minister today, why is it that anybody out there should believe that this is coming forward? How can he give us confidence that this year we will finally see these much-needed changes so that real equality in education can be made available?

Hon Mr Conway: My honourable friend and I going back as we do over a decade of doing business, the public's business, together, I am sure my friend from Scarborough, formerly of Pembroke, would expect that I would try to the very best of my ability to meet the schedule I have outlined.

But I want to say that I think it is something for the New Democratic Party to stand up here and complain about what the House is not doing when the honourable member for Welland-Thorold day after day after day blathers on and does not allow the government's business to proceed. My friend the member for Scarborough West, good and responsible member of the assembly that he is, can help the Legislative agenda by trying to bring some sense and some reason to the member for Welland-Thorold, who appears to be quite out of the control of the NDP leadership.

MINISTRY OF HOUSING

Mr McCague: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. According to the Chairman of Management Board, it takes the Minister of Housing 45.6 working days to answer correspondence. Has the new minister been able to improve on that?

Hon Mr Sweeney: My honourable colleague will be aware of the fact that the period in time that he is quoting was the three-month period before I became the minister. He will not be surprised if I indicated to him that I found that as unsatisfactory as he did. Within the three months after I became the minister, we got that down to 35 days. At the present time, for the past three months, it is 23 days, and our goal is between 15 and 20.

Mr McCague: The answer that the minister gave was very impressive, but I want to tell everybody here that I gave him notice of this question about three weeks ago.

Is the minister at all annoyed that he has lost the record for being the worst to the Minister of Health, who takes 30 working days to answer a letter?

Hon Mr Sweeney: The honourable member will be aware of the fact that I am responsible for two ministries and therefore have a lot of letters to sign, but I must say that since he gave me notice, I have signed an awful lot more. Let me say to him that if I had the amount of correspondence that the Minister of Health has, it would probably take me 30 days too.

CONTROL OF SMOKING

Mr Neumann: My question is for the Minister of Education. Last year I chaired hearings on the smoking-in-the-workplace legislation, and we heard from students who asked the government to provide some leadership to ban smoking on school sites. With this being Cancer Month, and the awareness that lung cancer is on the rise and that smoking is a very addictive practice, what is the Minister of Education prepared to do to provide some leadership to the school boards across Ontario to encourage young people to stop smoking and perhaps ban smoking on school sites?

Hon Mr Conway: Two things I say to my friend the member for Brantford. We have shown real leadership in this area. First, as members know, the smoking-in-the-workplace legislation does apply to schools, and the school boards across the province in many cases have gone beyond the requirements of that particular statute. Moreover, because of the good work done by our colleague the member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay, and certainly the good work done by the former Minister of Education, we now have in place mandatory drug education that

seeks to focus a great deal of attention upon healthy lifestyles and obviously educates youngsters about the importance of not smoking.

Obviously, there is more we can do, and we will continue to work co-operatively and constructively with our partners in education to ensure that the best possible environment is created for young people so that they do not engage in this habit, which we know is deleterious to their health.

PETITIONS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Harris: I want to petition the House for support—no, I have three petitions. The first one is to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, oppose the Ontario motorist protection plan. It does not protect us or our families."

It is signed by 16 additional members and I would like to leave that.

RESIDENTIAL INSURANCE

Mr Harris: I have two more. The second one is signed by 288 members of my riding.

"We, the undersigned residents of Ontario, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to revise residential insurance policies such that there not be a minimum-value ceiling in order that premiums may be purchased."

I too will affix my signature to that one; I kind of like that one.

EDUCATION OF HEARING-IMPAIRED

Mr Harris: I have a third one. This one is signed by 219 people, all individual petitions. Rather than do 219, I am going to do them all in one, but they are all the same.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly support the private member's bill recognizing American sign language—*langue des signes québécois* as the language of instruction for deaf students and that third reading of this bill be scheduled very soon so that deaf children will be able to have full access to education."

I too am very supportive of this bill and of this petition.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

Mrs E. J. Smith: I wish to present a petition on behalf of the member for York East. This petition is requesting the repeal of the French Language Services Act. I have signed this document, although I do not agree with it.

GREATER TORONTO AREA

Mr Philip: I do have a petition which I do agree with, and in summary, constituents of mine in Etobicoke-Rexdale object to the Peterson government charging higher taxes on the people of the greater Metropolitan Toronto area than on people in other parts of Ontario. They mention the licence tax of \$90 for a year on a licence plate, compared to as little as \$33 in other areas, and they are very opposed to the greater Metro Toronto area corporate concentration tax, which is greatly increasing taxes on businesses in the greater Metro Toronto area.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Mr Ward: Mr Speaker, I would seek unanimous consent that we recess until the previously agreed upon time for the presentation of the budget.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent for a motion to recess?

Agreed to.

The Speaker: Therefore I do now leave the chair and the House will resume at approximately 4 pm.

The House recessed at 1452.

1600

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUDGET RESOLUTION

Mr R. F. Nixon moved, seconded by Mr Peterson, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

The Speaker: I would ask the indulgence of the members and the Treasurer while the pages deliver copies of the budget to all members.

Do all members have a copy?

Some hon members: Yes.

Hon R. F. Nixon: I would like to thank the standing committee on finance and economic affairs for its helpful report and recommendations. I have met with or heard from over 75 groups representing a wide spectrum of interests in Ontario. They have offered many valuable insights into the issues facing our province.

I would also like to thank the staff of the Ministry of Treasury and Economics and my own staff, who have contributed many long hours to help me prepare this budget.

Finally, I would like to say to Ontarians who are interested—some of them may even be watching—that if they are interested in obtaining a copy of the budget, they should feel free to write to me at Queen's Park and we will see that a copy is sent to them for their interest and, I hope, edification.

BUDGET STATEMENT

Hon R. F. Nixon: In presenting the 1990 budget to the House, I will report on our provincial economy, announce levels of expenditure for programs and explain how the bills will be paid.

First, let me summarize our fiscal position.

Revenues are expected to rise to \$44.5 billion, an increase of 6.8 per cent. Taxes are reduced for many Ontarians and there are no general tax increases.

[Applause]

Hon R. F. Nixon: I hope I can contain the natural spontaneous appreciation of my colleagues; otherwise, we are going to be late for supper.

Expenditures are also estimated to be \$44.5 billion, an increase of 6.8 per cent.

Following the elimination of Ontario's deficit for the fiscal year just ended, and to maintain stability and fiscal flexibility, I am reporting today that this budget is balanced.

The fiscal position that we have achieved allows the government to pursue its agenda for the continued renewal and modernization of Ontario's programs and services.

In this budget, we are putting forward a plan that addresses the realities of the 1990s: an aging population, working families, a commuting labour force, the need for clean water and the demands of competition in a global marketplace.

The economy is now in its eighth consecutive year of expansion. Real output is expected to grow by 1.7 per cent after growth of 2.8 per cent last year. Solid gains in business investment and ongoing expansion of consumer spending will be the main sources of economic growth this year. Slower growth reflects the impact of high interest rates and a high exchange rate for the Canadian dollar.

Our province's industries must be able to grow and compete internationally. Ontario's advantage lies in developing its technologically advanced economy, relying upon innovation and a highly skilled labour force. Ontario does not seek to compete through low wages, inadequate environmental standards or poor protection of the public interest. On the contrary, the government believes that those who make the investment decisions on a global basis are not looking for sweatshop conditions.

Interjection.

Hon R. F. Nixon: That is for the member.

Maintaining this competitive strategy will require a healthy, well-educated and adaptable workforce, as well as continued development of the province's infrastructure. In addition, business must have the opportunity to operate at a reasonable cost within a competitive tax structure and a stable and predictable fiscal climate. Only in this way can we provide a strong economy and jobs for the future.

New investment in manufacturing machinery and equipment will be vital to Ontario as business responds to the realities of the free trade agreement, increased global competition, high interest rates and a high Canadian dollar.

In the 1988 budget, the Ontario current cost adjustment was introduced to reinforce Ontario's attractiveness for new manufacturing machinery and equipment investment. The current cost adjustment rate was set at 10 per cent in 1989, 15 per cent for 1990 and will be doubled in this budget to 30 per cent, commencing 1 January 1991.

At maturity, this improvement will result in an additional \$140 million to encourage continued new manufacturing investment.

An efficient transportation system is essential to Ontario's growing economy. To respond to this need, the \$2-billion transportation capital program was introduced in last year's budget. This five-year program is providing \$1.2 billion for various provincial highway projects throughout the province, \$400 million in GO Transit service improvements and \$400 million for municipal roads and transit. Total transportation spending will be almost \$2.5 billion this year, including \$310 million in transportation capital program funding.

1610

The government has recently announced a comprehensive expansion of the municipal transit system for the greater Toronto area. The projects in this program will result in a rapid transit network of over 140 kilometres. As well, the Minister of Transportation announced improvements to GO services. These plans will require up to \$5 billion over the next 10 years from the province, municipalities and the private sector.

To continue the enhancement of viable alternatives for commuters, the government is introducing a further service expansion: immediate GO rail extensions to Barrie, Bowmanville and

Guelph. Future extensions of GO to Brantford and Peterborough will be reviewed.

Interjections.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Well, I was going to mention Sarnia, but what are you going to do?

In January the federal government discontinued the Via Rail night train service, which provided an important link between northeastern and southern Ontario. The Ontario government, through the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission, has continued its day train service. The commission will be instructed by the province to open talks with the federal government towards the commission re-establishing a night train service.

Interjections.

Hon R. F. Nixon: It is for the benefit of my two friends sitting opposite.

A healthy trucking industry is important to Ontario's competitiveness. Current federal and provincial tax laws do not provide a level playing field for Ontario's trucking industry to compete with business based in the United States. I have, therefore, asked the federal Minister of Finance to expedite the renegotiation of the Canada-US tax treaty in regard to trucking, so that Canadian and US carriers compete on a more equal basis. In the meantime, the province will introduce its own measures to require American-based truckers to pay provincial corporate income tax for business conducted in this province.

Demographic, technological and economic changes are creating competitive challenges as well as opportunities for Ontario. The government supports the view of the Premier's Council on Technology that labour and business, working together, have a key role in addressing the training and adjustment requirements of the labour market.

The government views training as a responsibility to be shared with the federal government as well as with industry and labour. If Canada is to have a productive workforce, the provinces and the federal government must work together to build high-quality training opportunities throughout the nation.

Ontario will do its part. In our continuing effort to upgrade skills and address shortages, Ontario will provide an additional \$11 million for the in-school training of apprentices this year. This will bring Ontario's share of spending on apprenticeship and related programs to \$46 million this year.

To help provide for modern equipment and library materials and to enhance the quality of education, \$18 million has been allocated for universities. This is—

[Laughter]

Hon R. F. Nixon: The loud laugh bespeaks the vacant mind. In case the New Democratic Party members were worried, this is in addition to the \$1.8 billion for university operating grants already announced in November.

In the 1988 budget the government responded to local needs for school facilities with a \$900-million, three-year commitment to school construction and renovation. This commitment was increased to \$1.2 billion over four years in the 1989 budget.

The multi-year provincial capital commitment for schools is extended for a fifth year, to provide at least \$300 million in 1993-94. When combined with local contributions, this will allow an additional \$500 million in school construction. Through this multi-year commitment, the government will provide a total of \$1.5 billion in education capital.

The government places a high priority on protecting and enhancing our environment. Funding provided to the Ministry of the Environment will total \$649 million this year, an increase of 22 per cent over last year. In this fiscal year, capital outlays by the ministry will increase by 34 per cent to \$279 million.

As well, the government recently announced several significant initiatives to improve the quality of life and respond to increasing urban needs in the greater Toronto area, including the creation of a major urban park in the Rouge Valley and the planned development of a community of 90,000 at Seaton.

The supply of clean, safe water is vital to this province's future. Our current water and sewer capital programs will provide \$175 million in grants and \$71 million for loans this year, but projections are for greatly increasing needs for new and rehabilitated facilities. An expanded commitment to water and sewer infrastructure is required.

To meet these needs, funding will be transferred to the new water and sewer crown corporation to be established in early 1991. It will build and operate water and sewage facilities in co-operation with municipalities and the private sector. Funding of new water and sewage development will be assisted by the corporation's ability to borrow with a provincial guarantee of its debt. This will permit more rapid progress in meeting the needs for new, expanded and upgraded facilities consistent with environmental, health and affordable housing objectives. The corporation will provide clean water and ensure environmentally sound treatment of sewage.

The new corporation will report to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who is responsible for local government and community planning in Ontario. The Minister of the Environment will be responsible for setting appropriate standards and for continued effective environmental scrutiny of our systems.

One of the consequences of our increased prosperity has been the ever-growing problem of garbage disposal. The Minister of the Environment has announced the government's intention to achieve a significant reduction in waste requiring disposal. Funding of \$70 million will be provided in support of municipal, institutional and industrial waste management, a 61 per cent increase over last year.

Ontario's approach to waste abatement will require the producers of waste to pay for a greater share of the costs of developing new and safe landfill and incineration facilities. This will provide for a fair distribution of the costs of waste management. It will also improve economic incentives for environmentally sound waste abatement practices.

Improving the quality of our environment and preserving our natural heritage are important responsibilities of government. The Niagara Escarpment Commission is responsible for ensuring balanced use of its resource endowment while maintaining the escarpment.

Funding and responsibility for the plan and the commission are being transferred from the Minister of Municipal Affairs to the Minister of the Environment. This recognizes the unique environmental significance of the escarpment area.

Current programs such as the northern Ontario heritage fund and the eastern Ontario community economic development fund do much to encourage balanced growth across the province. In this budget, the government continues its commitment to a more equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth in all regions of the province.

The \$275-million northern Ontario relocation program is providing substantial economic benefits to northern Ontario through the transfer of 1,600 government jobs and the construction of six new buildings. The relocation to Timmins is com-

plete, with construction well advanced in North Bay, Sudbury and Thunder Bay. A new office complex in Sault Ste Marie is scheduled for completion in the fall of 1991.

Decentralization to other parts of Ontario is also under way. For example, 450 jobs in the head office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food will be relocated to Guelph in 1992.

Relocating government offices and jobs throughout the province distributes employment and helps stabilize communities affected by rapidly changing economic conditions. The government plans, therefore, to continue decentralizing its functions from the Metropolitan Toronto area over the next several years.

Farmers face unique challenges: unpredictable commodity prices, unfair international subsidy practices, uncertain growing conditions and increasingly intensive capital requirements. All these have combined with high interest rates to reduce the outlook for farm incomes this year. To help meet these challenges, \$48 million have been allocated for new interest rate assistance to farmers. The government expects that the federal Minister of Agriculture will match these funds as part of his recently announced special assistance program.

In recognition of the importance of environmentally sound agricultural practices, \$48 million over four years will be provided in financial assistance for soil conservation through the land stewardship program.

1620

The government is committed to improving the competitiveness of the food processing sector. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food will continue to work with the industry to implement a food processing development strategy.

Under the Canada-Ontario forest resources development agreement the federal and Ontario governments contributed a total of \$150 million to forest management over five years on a 50-50 basis. This agreement expired more than a year ago. Ontario will again supplement its own \$15-million share with an additional \$18 million, for a total expenditure on forest management of \$232 million this year.

A healthy investment climate for mineral exploration is needed to ensure a competitive and dynamic mining industry. The federal budget's termination of the Canadian exploration incentive program removes support for mineral exploration at a time when base metal reserves are declining and some communities are experiencing serious difficulty as a result of mine closures or cutbacks.

To help promote mineral exploration in Ontario, an extra \$25 million will be allocated over three years to expand the Ontario prospectors' assistance program and the Ontario mineral incentive program. An additional \$5 million in special incentives will also be provided over the next three years to encourage exploration in the vicinity of selected northern Ontario communities.

In addition, we are pursuing discussions to renew the Canada-Ontario mineral development agreement, which expired on 31 March 1990.

Efficient, high-quality social services and a fair distribution of the benefits of our wealth are fundamental to the wellbeing of the people of the province. Continued funding is provided in this budget to support the modernization and enrichment of our social programs. Despite the federal government's decision to reduce its support for cost-shared programs, Ontario will ensure that vital services are not jeopardized.

Over the next decade, the number of elderly and persons with disabilities will increase dramatically. Governments must

implement plans now to ensure that adequate and efficient services will be available. This will require fundamental reform in the way we provide long-term care in the province and represents one of the most significant improvements in health and social services since the introduction of medicare.

To achieve this goal, the budget includes funding for the comprehensive reform of long-term care. This reform will create new, community-based service access agencies. These will allow people to find the help they need in one place and will ensure that appropriate care is provided, either in their homes or, where necessary, in long-term care facilities.

The new system of community-based access and in-home support will have increased funding of up to \$410 million by the middle of the 1990s. Included is \$11 million in immediate funding to improve visiting homemakers' compensation. In addition, home support services delivered by community agencies will be greatly expanded. Provincial contributions to these services will be increased by \$30 million when fully established. Co-payments will offset some of the costs of non-health-care services such as homemaking and meal preparation. There will be no charges for personal care. Lower-income Ontarians will be exempt from all charges for in-home services.

To improve the quality of care in the institutional sector, a consistent level-of-care funding system will be introduced for homes for the aged and nursing homes. This means more resources will be available to care for residents with greater needs. Through increased resident and government contributions, more than \$200 million in additional funding will be available to homes for the aged and nursing homes by 1992.

Long-term care reform is a major step forward in this province's health and social service system. Increased funding of \$52 million is provided in this budget to initiate the reform.

The Premier's Council on Health Strategy recommended a review of the province's health capital plan. In January the Minister of Health announced a four-point priority framework for health capital: regional and community-based health services; priority programs, such as cancer, cardiac and emergency services; maintaining standards for safety and workplace health, and services needed in high-growth areas and to meet the needs of a growing seniors population. These priorities are intended to complement the government's long-term care reform.

To facilitate the planning framework, the government will provide \$1.3 billion for health capital over the next four years. For this year, \$250 million will be allocated for health capital. Approximately \$300 million of this multi-year funding is designated to increase cancer treatment capacity throughout the province.

In 1990-91, total Ministry of Health spending will increase by 10.9 per cent to \$15.3 billion, or \$1.5 billion more than last year. Hospital operating funding will increase by 9.7 per cent to \$6.6 billion, including the recent enhancement of \$60 million. Other health and social service agencies have also had support for their basic operating costs increased by an additional \$39 million.

This year, combined federal and provincial contributions for child care will be \$396 million, an increase of 16 per cent over last year's spending. Due to Ottawa's limitation on Canada assistance plan cost-sharing, federal contributions will remain at last year's level of \$139 million. Ontario's share will be \$257 million, an increase of 27 per cent over last year. This funding includes \$10 million to operate newly licensed spaces in schools and non-profit centres. Provincial commitments are being honoured in the absence of federal contributions, but we are hopeful that new national child care legislation will be

forthcoming, to renew Ottawa's role in sharing child care costs across Canada.

Last year's budget announced improved compensation for lower-paid workers in agencies. A further \$58 million on an annual basis is provided in this budget to increase compensation in community agencies. The initiative will be targeted to services for persons with developmental handicaps, attendant care and home support, child welfare, child and family intervention services and halfway houses. This is in addition to the funding already noted for visiting homemakers through long-term care reform. This will help agencies hire and retain qualified, capable staff to provide these needed community services.

I am announcing today a reduction in Ontario incomes taxes for lower-income families with children. The Ontario tax reduction program will be enriched to provide a \$200 supplement in respect of each dependent child aged 18 or under.

The enrichment will significantly increase the income level at which Ontario income tax becomes payable. For example, a single working parent supporting two children currently starts to pay Ontario income tax at an income of about \$14,100. Following the enrichment, the level at which this parent will begin to pay Ontario income tax will be about \$18,700.

An additional \$200 supplement to the Ontario tax reduction will be provided in respect of dependants with disabilities, regardless of age. This further supplement recognizes that many persons with serious disabilities are cared for at home by family, and in some cases these families have low incomes. Where a child with disabilities is being cared for at home, the supporting parent may claim both supplements, for a total of \$400.

The improved Ontario tax reduction will provide 250,000 supplements on behalf of children and dependants with disabilities, benefiting 115,000 families. The cost of this initiative is estimated at \$44 million this year, increasing the total cost of the Ontario tax reduction to \$88 million.

In last year's budget, the government undertook a major reform of social assistance to provide better opportunities and to improve benefits for recipients. This initiative was and continues to be supported by business, labour, religious groups and service providers.

1630

The cost of reform was to be shared with the federal government under the Canada assistance plan. In its recent budget, Ottawa announced it was freezing Ontario's Canada assistance plan entitlement at five per cent above that of last year. By doing so, the federal government is not participating as a full partner in social assistance reform. Ontario will not follow the federal direction. This budget continues to provide funding for the reform process.

In the fall of 1989, children's benefits were improved and the supports to employment program was initiated. As of January 1990, social assistance recipients also benefited from increased rates and improved shelter allowances. I am announcing today that basic benefits and shelter allowances will be increased by five per cent effective 1 January 1991. In total, social assistance spending will grow by \$406 million, or 16 per cent, over last year.

As part of the government's ongoing commitment to the aboriginal peoples of the province, an additional \$14 million will be provided for native-managed social service initiatives. The federal government provides cost-sharing for these services under the Indian welfare agreement. The Ministry of Community and Social Services will provide these funds for increased homemaker and nursing services for native elderly, new

native child and family service agencies and additional counselling services for families and their children. This funding will support and strengthen our native communities.

Assessment of property value on behalf of municipalities is currently undertaken by the Ministry of Revenue. A main objective of the assessment program is to ensure that a consistent assessment base exists in Ontario. This is being accomplished by a program of first-time reassessments for all Ontario municipalities, as well as the provision of supplementary assessments and other related activities. Rapid growth in many areas of the province has generated significant demands for assessment activity, and municipalities have requested that services be accelerated.

To respond to these requests, the province will establish the Property Assessment Corp. The new corporation will be better able to meet the assessment priorities of municipalities. The province will transfer its \$108-million allocation for assessment activities to the corporation.

The planned implementation of the federal goods and services tax on 1 January 1991 will result in significant disruptions for business and consumers. Ontario finds the federal GST unacceptable.

No fundamental changes are made to Ontario's retail sales tax in this budget. To assist Ontario's vendors, particularly smaller businesses which play an important role in collecting our retail sales tax—almost \$9 billion—this budget increases the rate of compensation for vendor collection from four per cent to five per cent and increases the annual maximum compensation from \$1,000 to \$1,500. Other minor changes are made to definitions and to administrative practices.

Ontario's retail sales tax revenue estimates will be reduced by \$1 million on a full-year basis as a consequence of the introduction of the GST and the changes in this budget.

Mr Brandt: Oh, no.

An hon member: Tax on tax.

Mr B. Rae: I don't believe you.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Perhaps I should repeat for some of my colleagues in the official opposition that our tax revenue will be reduced by \$1 million on a full-year basis as a consequence of the introduction of the GST and the changes in this budget.

This budget contains a tax increase on tobacco. As of midnight tonight, the tax per cigarette will be increased by one cent and the tax on cut tobacco will be made consistent with that on cigarettes. Together these changes will raise \$158 million this year.

The concerns recently expressed by many provinces about fiscal arrangements with Ottawa are shared by Ontario. A constructive resolution must be found.

Over the past several years, the federal government has unilaterally changed the rules for every major federal-provincial fiscal arrangement. We support Ottawa's stated goal of deficit reduction, but we do not believe that Canadian federalism is well served by failing to live up to federal-provincial agreements.

It is therefore our intent to seek opportunities to work with Ottawa, the provinces and the territories towards the renewal of fiscal arrangements and in the process to contribute to strengthening Canadian federalism.

The government is maintaining its proven record of responsible fiscal management and social and economic progress. Ontario's budget has been balanced while reducing taxes for many families and businesses. Existing programs have been consolidated while we have funded new initiatives necessary to

sustain social and economic development. This is a solid basis for our continued shared prosperity in a healthy and safe Ontario.

In the past five years the government has modernized our programs and improved their efficiency. We have emphasized our social priorities—education, housing, health and social services—while increasing support for the environment, transportation and public infrastructure. At the same time we have contributed to economic stability and business confidence by steadily reducing our deficit.

Last year we achieved a balanced budget for the first time in 20 years. I am delighted to announce another balanced budget for this fiscal year and to report that total debt will be reduced by \$430 million, which, the honourable members would be interested to know, is the first reduction in Ontario's debt in 43 years.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Actually, the honourable members would be glad to know that 42 years ago, in 1948, George Drew dissolved this Legislature only three years after winning a large majority in 1945. I throw that in for the edification of my honourable friend.

The leadership of the Premier in all these initiatives has been strong, confident and effective. As we complete our first five years in office, we are proud of our achievements in fulfilling our priorities, meeting our objectives and balancing our budget.

The Speaker: Are there any other members wishing to participate in the debate?

On motion by Mr Laughren, the debate was adjourned.

Hon Mr Ward: Mr Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent of the House to revert to introduction of bills.

Agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT CORPORATION ACT, 1990

Mr Mancini moved first reading of Bill 156, An Act to establish the Property Assessment Corporation.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

RETAIL SALES TAX AMENDMENT ACT, 1990

Mr Mancini moved first reading of Bill 158, An Act to Amend the Retail Sales Tax Act.

Motion agreed to.

INCOME TAX AMENDMENT ACT, 1990

Mr Mancini moved first reading of Bill 159, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act.

Motion agreed to.

TOBACCO TAX AMENDMENT ACT, 1990

Mr Mancini moved first reading of Bill 160, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 1644

ERRATA

| No. | Page | Column | Line | Should read: |
|-----|------|--------|------|--|
| 20 | 710 | 1 | 8 | businessman, a Kozy Korner variety on Pine Street South in |
| 20 | 710 | 1 | 38 | training benefits, day care expenses and travel allowance. |

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|---|
| Adams, Peter | Peterborough | L | Assistant to the Minister of the Environment |
| Allen, Richard | Hamilton West | NDP | |
| Ballinger, William G. | Durham-York | L | Assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Beer, Hon Charles | York North | L | Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. | Muskoka-Georgian Bay | L | Minister of Tourism and Recreation, minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Bossy, Maurice L. | Chatham-Kent | L | Assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Bradley, Hon James J. | St Catharines | L | Minister of the Environment |
| Brandt, Andrew S. | Sarnia | PC | Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party |
| Breaugh, Michael J. | Oshawa | NDP | First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Brown, Michael A. | Algoma-Manitoulin | L | |
| Bryden, Marion | Beaches-Woodbine | NDP | |
| Callahan, Robert V. | Brampton South | L | |
| Campbell, Sterling | Sudbury | L | |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor | Oriole | L | Minister of Health |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. | Oakville South | L | Assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Charlton, Brian A. | Hamilton Mountain | NDP | |
| Chiarelli, Robert | Ottawa West | L | |
| Cleary, John C. | Cornwall | L | Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Collins, Hon Shirley | Wentworth East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. | Renfrew North | L | Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities, Minister of Skills Development |
| Cooke, David R. | Kitchener | L | Assistant to the Minister of Citizenship |
| Cooke, David S. | Windsor-Riverside | NDP | House leader |
| Cordiano, Joseph | Lawrence | L | |
| Cousens, W. Donald | Markham | PC | |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. | London North | PC | |
| Cureatz, Sam L. | Durham East | PC | Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Curling, Alvin | Scarborough North | L | Assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Daigeler, Hans | Nepean | L | Assistant to the Minister of Revenue |
| Dietsch, Michael M. | St Catharines-Brock | L | Assistant to the Minister of Labour |
| Eakins, John F. | Victoria-Haliburton | L | |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. | Perth | L | Speaker |
| Elliot, R. Walter | Halton North | L | Assistant to the Minister of Housing |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. | Bruce | L | Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Financial Institutions |
| Epp, Herbert A. | Waterloo North | L | |
| Eves, Ernie L. | Parry Sound | PC | House leader |
| Farnan, Michael | Cambridge | NDP | |
| Faubert, Frank | Scarborough-Ellesmere | L | |
| Fawcett, Joan M. | Northumberland | L | Assistant to the Minister of Skills Development |
| Ferraro, Rick E. | Guelph | L | Assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions |
| Fleet, David | High Park-Swansea | L | Assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Fontaine, Hon René | Cochrane North | L | Minister of Northern Development |
| Fulton, Ed | Scarborough East | L | Assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation |
| Furlong, Allan W. | Durham Centre | L | |
| Grandmaître, Bernard C. | Ottawa East | L | Assistant to the Minister of Health |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|---|
| Grier, Ruth A. | Etobicoke-Lakeshore | NDP | |
| Haggerty, Ray | Niagara South | L | Assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| Hampton, Howard | Rainy River | NDP | |
| Harris, Michael D. | Nipissing | PC | |
| Hart, Hon Christine E. | York East | L | Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Henderson, D. James | Etobicoke-Humber | L | Assistant to the minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Hošek, Chaviva | Oakwood | L | Assistant to the Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet |
| Jackson, Cameron | Burlington South | PC | |
| Johnson, Jack | Wellington | PC | |
| Johnston, Richard F. | Scarborough West | NDP | |
| Kanter, Ron | St Andrew-St Patrick | L | |
| Kerrio, Vincent G. | Niagara Falls | L | |
| Keyes, Kenneth A. | Kingston and The Islands | L | Assistant to the Minister of Education |
| Kormos, Peter | Welland-Thorold | NDP | |
| Kozyra, Taras B. | Port Arthur | L | Assistant to the Minister of Northern Development |
| Kwinter, Hon Monte | Wilson Heights | L | Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Laughren, Floyd | Nickel Belt | NDP | |
| LeBourdais, Linda | Etobicoke West | L | |
| Leone, Laureano | Downsview | L | Assistant to the Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Lipsett, Ron | Grey | L | Assistant to the Minister of Energy |
| Lupusella, Tony | Dovercourt | L | Assistant to the Minister of Government Services |
| MacDonald, Keith | Prince Edward-Lennox-Hastings | L | |
| Mackenzie, Bob | Hamilton East | NDP | |
| Mahoney, Steven W. | Mississauga West | L | |
| Mancini, Hon Remo | Essex South | L | Minister of Revenue |
| Marland, Margaret | Mississauga South | PC | |
| Martel, Shelley | Sudbury East | NDP | |
| Matrundola, Gino | Willowdale | L | |
| McCague, George R. | Simcoe West | PC | |
| McClelland, Carman | Brampton North | L | |
| McGuigan, James F. | Essex-Kent | L | Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| McLean, Allan K. | Simcoe East | PC | |
| McLeod, Hon Lyn | Fort William | L | Minister of Energy, Minister of Natural Resources |
| Miclash, Frank | Kenora | L | |
| Miller, Gordon I. | Norfolk | L | Assistant to the Minister of Transportation |
| Morin, Hon Gilles E. | Carleton East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Morin-Strom, Karl E. | Sault Ste Marie | NDP | |
| Neumann, David E. | Brantford | L | |
| Nicholas, Cindy | Scarborough Centre | L | Assistant to the Solicitor General |
| Nixon, J. Bradford | York Mills | L | |
| Nixon, Hon Robert F. | Brant-Haldimand | L | Deputy Premier, Treasurer of Ontario, Minister of Economics |
| Oddie Munro, Lily | Hamilton Centre | L | |
| Offer, Hon Steven, | Mississauga North | L | Solicitor General |
| O'Neil, Hon Hugh P. | Quinte | L | Minister of Mines |
| O'Neill, Yvonne | Ottawa-Rideau | L | |
| Owen, Bruce | Simcoe Centre | L | |
| Patten, Hon Richard | Ottawa Centre | L | Minister of Correctional Services |
| Pelissero, Harry E. | Lincoln | L | |
| Peterson, Hon David R. | London Centre | L | Premier, President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Philip, Ed | Etobicoke-Rexdale | NDP | |
| Phillips, Hon Gerry | Scarborough-Agincourt | L | Minister of Labour |
| Poirier, Jean | Prescott and Russell | L | Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Pollock, Jim | Hastings-Peterborough | PC | |
| Polsinelli, Claudio | Yorkview | L | Assistant to the Attorney General |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|---|
| Poole, Dianne | Eglinton | L | Assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Pope, Alan W. | Cochrane South | PC | |
| Pouliot, Gilles | Lake Nipigon | NDP | |
| Rae, Bob | York South | NDP | Leader of the Official Opposition |
| Ramsay, Hon David | Timiskaming | L | Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Ray, Michael C. | Windsor-Walkerville | L | |
| Reville, David | Riverdale | NDP | Chief whip |
| Reycraft, Douglas R. | Middlesex | L | Assistant to the Treasurer and Minister of Economics |
| Riddell, Jack | Huron | L | Assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources |
| Roberts, Marietta L. D. | Elgin | L | |
| Runciman, Robert W. | Leeds-Grenville | PC | |
| Ruprecht, Tony | Parkdale | L | Assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services |
| Scott, Hon Ian G. | St George-St David | L | Attorney General |
| Smith, David W. | Lambton | L | Assistant to the Minister of Correctional Services |
| Smith, E. Joan | London South | L | Chief government whip |
| Sola, John | Mississauga East | L | |
| Sorbara, Hon Gregory S. | York Centre | L | Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| South, Larry | Frontenac-Addington | L | Assistant to the Minister of Mines |
| Sterling, Norman W. | Carleton | PC | |
| Stoner, Norah | Durham West | L | Assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities |
| Sullivan, Barbara | Halton Centre | L | |
| Sweeney, Hon John | Kitchener-Wilmot | L | Minister of Housing and Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Tatham, Charlie | Oxford | L | |
| Velshi, Murad | Don Mills | L | |
| Villeneuve, Noble | Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry | PC | Chief whip |
| Ward, Hon Christopher C. | Wentworth North | L | Minister of Government Services, government House leader |
| Wildman, Bud | Algoma | NDP | |
| Wilson, Hon Mavis, | Dufferin-Peel | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Wiseman, Douglas J. | Lanark-Renfrew | PC | |
| Wong, Hon Robert C. | Fort York | L | Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for the Ontario Human Rights Commission, minister responsible for multiculturalism, minister responsible for race relations |
| Wrye, Hon William | Windsor-Sandwich | L | Minister of Transportation |
| Vacant | Ottawa South | | |

A list of committee members is published in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

CONTENTS

Tuesday 24 April 1990

Members' statements

| | |
|---|-----|
| Workers' Compensation Board | 723 |
| Miss Martel | |
| Breast cancer | 723 |
| Mr Cousens | |
| Agricultural industry | 723 |
| Mr McGuigan | |
| Landlords' restrictions on pets | 723 |
| Mr Kormos | |
| Waste disposal | 724 |
| Mr Harris | |
| Pollution control | 724 |
| Mr J. B. Nixon | |
| Community mental health legislation | 724 |
| Mr Reville | |
| Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre | 724 |
| Mr McLean | |
| Great Ride Against Cancer | 724 |
| Mrs E. J. Smith | |

Oral questions

| | |
|--|-----|
| Ontario economy | 725 |
| Mr Mackenzie | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Mr Allen | |
| Mr Charlton | |
| Affordable housing | 725 |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | |
| Mr Sweeney | |
| Court system | 726 |
| Mr Harris | |
| Mr Scott | |
| Hospital financing | 727 |
| Mr Eves | |
| Mrs Caplan | |
| Workers' Compensation Board | 728 |
| Mr Wildman | |
| Mr Phillips | |
| Miss Martel | |
| Tourism | 728 |
| Mr McLean | |
| Mr Black | |
| Long-term care | 729 |
| Mr McGuigan | |
| Mr Beer | |
| Windsor area economy | 730 |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | |
| Mr Phillips | |
| Taxation | 730 |
| Mr Jackson | |
| Mr Mancini | |
| Child care | 731 |
| Mr Daigeler | |
| Mr Beer | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Education of disabled | 731 |
| Mr R. F. Johnston | |
| Mr Conway | |
| Ministry of Housing | 732 |
| Mr McCague | |
| Mr Sweeney | |
| Control of smoking | 732 |
| Mr Neumann | |
| Mr Conway | |

Petitions

| | |
|--|-----|
| Automobile insurance | 732 |
| Mr Harris | |
| Residential insurance | 732 |
| Mr Harris | |
| Education of hearing-impaired | 732 |
| Mr Harris | |
| French-language services | 732 |
| Mrs E. J. Smith | |
| Greater Toronto area | 732 |
| Mr Philip | |

Budget

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Resolution | 733 |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Statement | 733 |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |

First readings

| | |
|--|-----|
| Property Assessment Corporation Act, 1990, Bill 156 | 737 |
| Mr Mancini | |
| Agreed to | |
| Retail Sales Tax Amendment Act, 1990, Bill 158 | 737 |
| Mr Mancini | |
| Agreed to | |
| Income Tax Amendment Act, 1990, Bill 159 | 737 |
| Mr Mancini | |
| Agreed to | |
| Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 1990, Bill 160 | 737 |
| Mr Mancini | |
| Agreed to | |

Other business

| | |
|---|-----|
| Business of the House | 733 |
| Mr Ward | |
| Recess | 733 |
| Adjournment | 737 |
| Erratum | 737 |
| Alphabetical list of members | 738 |



22 90

22 90

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 25 April 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le mercredi 25 avril 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Languages in Hansard

Hansard reports all debates in English or French as spoken by the participants. It does not translate remarks made in either language. Headings and tables of contents reflect language use.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 25 April 1990

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

LAYOFFS

Mr Kormos: Sadly and tragically, earlier today Noranda Forest Recycled Papers announced a layoff of 95 employees at its Thorold operation. These 95 employees are to be terminated by the end of August 1990. It constitutes 16 per cent of the total workforce at Noranda Forest Recycled Papers in Thorold. This is going to have grave consequences for those workers, for their families and indeed for the community of Thorold.

It is imperative that the Ministry of Labour and this government get involved immediately to ensure that all that can be done indeed is being done and to ensure that those workers' interests, their families' interests and the interests of the city of Thorold are safeguarded as best as can be.

Members should also know that Noranda is committed to the prospect of developing recycling programs. A recycling plant is potentially planned for the Thorold area. Noranda is awaiting Ministry of the Environment approval for two locations that it has proposed so that the potential impact of the layoff of these 95 workers can be offset. It is imperative as well that the Ministry of the Environment facilitate the approval process, speed it up as much as it can in an effort to speed up the development of those recycling plants on Noranda's part, with the view to keeping those 95 staff persons, both salaried and hourly, on the payroll.

ANNIVERSARY OF CHERNOBYL DISASTER

Mr Jackson: I rise to call the attention of all members of the House to the fact that tomorrow, 26 April, marks the fourth anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe in the Ukraine, the worst ever recorded in modern history.

That disaster saw tonnes of radioactive core blown into the atmosphere. Thousands died, while still hundreds of thousands more, including many children, became chronically ill with diseases such as cancer, due to the fact that they ate, and must continue to eat, food and drink milk produced in contaminated agricultural areas.

The tragic human and environmental aftermath of Chernobyl continues. Ontario has a distinguished world record as a leader in nuclear development. With that, however, comes the responsibility for leadership in terms of support for victims of nuclear disasters when they occur.

I would like to take this opportunity to call on both the federal and provincial governments to come to the assistance of the Chernobyl victims in their time of crisis and suffering. On their behalf, I call on Canada to help train medical teams from the Ukraine in the use of advanced drugs useful in treating radiation-related illnesses. We should also accept for treatment the many critically ill children and should also prepare to participate in the International Red Cross Chernobyl appeal.

Although Chernobyl is a long distance away, may our hearts hear the cries of its victims, of its children, and may we reach out to them as we would to our own.

ALCOHOL ADVERTISING

Mr Velshi: On 26 March the Liquor Licence Board of Ontario announced revised guidelines for the beverage alcohol industry which came into effect on 2 April. These revisions are replacing many licence board directives on advertising that have governed the industry for the past 18 years. Those regulations not revised have been clarified and articulated to reflect today's standards.

I recognize that the intent of these revisions is to make the guidelines more timely, effective and representative of today's values. However, I feel that some of these revisions are ambiguous in light of the liquor licensing board's policy position.

At the announcement a few weeks ago, the chairman of the board stated "The document reflects the board's intent to create a cohesive and consistent set of guidelines that are realistic and focused." I ask all members of this House, how can the guidelines allowing the depiction of liquor consumption in print media be construed as responsible advertising?

The province of Ontario, through the Ministry of the Attorney General, has funded liquor awareness programs in high schools in my riding of Don Mills. It is my intent to solicit their opinion and those of other schools regarding these new guidelines. I do not support this guideline as I feel it contradicts our existing mandate regarding responsible alcohol use. By relaxing these regulations, the licensing board has now become a marketing and advertising arm of the liquor industry.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr Morin-Strom: Yesterday's stand-pat, do-nothing budget flagrantly ignores 800,000 northerners. The Liberal budget contains no measures to deal with the thousands of working families in northern Ontario who face the hardship of unemployment as companies reduce their operations or close their mines and mills. Rio Algom and Denison are throwing over 2,000 workers into the streets of Elliot Lake. Dofasco has recently closed its mines, the towns' largest employer, in Kirkland Lake and Temagami. Nothing in the Liberal budget addresses the problems facing these workers and others across northern Ontario. So even though the Liberals predict more hardship, they propose to do nothing about it.

If the Liberals were serious about long-term development in the north, they would be creating a real northern Ontario heritage fund. Despite the millions that the government takes out of the north in measures specific to northern industries like mining and forestry, there is very little going back in. Road construction and improvement is a vital priority in the north, but Metropolitan Toronto gets a \$5-billion commitment for its transportation network while the north gets nothing for the four-laning of the Trans-Canada Highway.

As well, this budget has nothing for the high cost of gasoline paid by northerners, leaving us at a serious competitive disadvantage. The Liberal budget is a bad-news budget for northerners, and northerners are damned mad about it.

TOURISM

Mr McLean: My statement concerns the Treasurer's budget, which failed to address the concerns of Ontario's tourism and hospitality industry. In fact, the budget completely

ignores this province's third-largest industry, which has seen its revenue drop \$3.25 billion and the loss of 30,000 full-time jobs in 1989. As well, trips by Ontarians within their own province declined by 27.8 per cent, while the number of Ontarians visiting the United States increased by 38 per cent last year.

The Treasurer knows the tourism industry asked him to establish a Premier's council on tourism development, and he gave it nothing. The tourism industry asked him to eliminate the five per cent provincial sales tax on motel and resort accommodation, as promised by the Premier on 3 April 1985, and to repeal the commercial concentration tax imposed on large hotels in the greater Toronto area, and he gave it nothing.

The tourism industry asked the Treasurer to reduce the employer health tax for tourism and hospitality enterprises, and he gave it nothing. The tourism industry asked the Treasurer to reinvest all provincial revenues collected through road taxes in the improvement and expansion of Ontario roads. Once again, he gave it nothing.

The Treasurer's budget indicates to me that his government has decided not to co-operate with, support or even recognize what was once a vital industry in this province. When the election is called, I hope they give him nothing.

1340

EARTH DAY

Mr Adams: On Sunday my constituents celebrated Earth Day. This year's celebration was the 20th anniversary of this event. Initially it was largely an American event, credited with the passage of the US Clean Air Act and the creation of the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Events previous to Earth Day in my riding included tree planting, cleaning the Indian River, composting lunch waste, eating garbage-free lunches, performing a play called *To Touch the Earth*, creating songs, posters and so on. On Sunday, Peterborough Square hosted an Eco-Fair, including display booths, entertainment and kit building.

But we must view Earth Day for what it is: a chance to see that men, women and children of all ages, all occupations, all nationalities and races share this planet with other living creatures, savour the fascination of nature and reflect on the mystery of that blue and white globe hung in the dark sky.

A truly successful Earth Day would mean no more poisons spewing into lakes and rivers, no more chemical clouds blocking out the sun. It would mean switching to environmentally sound manufacturing methods. It would mean giving up conveniences which we take for granted.

But who thought three years ago that the vast majority of Peterborough residents would be separating cans, glass and newspapers from their regular household garbage? Who thought that cloth shopping bags would be making a comeback? No one individual can save the earth, but millions of individuals—

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Miss Martel: On 3 April I raised the workers' compensation case of Gojko Toljagic. Mr Toljagic was a caretaker at North Toronto Collegiate for 22½ years before he died of mesothelioma in October 1989. The family applied for compensation, but this was denied as the board claimed the worker would have had very little, if any, exposure to asbestos fibres.

The Ministry of Labour then obtained 19 photographs, a lab report and a videotape showing the asbestos in the school. The board was to reconsider the claim, given the additional evidence.

On 22 April the Workers' Compensation Board again denied the claim. The board decision stated, "While there is evidence of the presence of loose asbestos fibres, it has not been shown that there was intense exposure to airborne fibres during the course of the employment; combined with the latency factor, it is difficult to relate the onset of this disease to employment at North Toronto Collegiate."

According to Dr Rolland Wong at the Occupational Health Clinic for Ontario Workers, the disease mesothelioma is almost exclusively caused from exposure to asbestos. Further, there is a latency period of 20 years between the first exposure to asbestos and the appearance of mesothelioma, and this worker meets that criterion. Dr Wong concluded that the board should accept the claim now because it will ultimately be won at the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal, but that appeal process will take some two years.

This decision is inexcusable and it really ought to be examined by the Minister of Labour.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mrs Marland: The Treasurer was gloating yesterday about his supposed commitment to the environment. Let me put his announcements in perspective.

An increase of 22 per cent over last year for the environment sounds enticing, but then we see the ministry's budget is only 1.3 per cent of government spending. That is an increase of just 0.2 per cent since the Liberals took office five years ago. During the same period, taxes rose 132 per cent. Is our environment not worth more than 1.3 per cent of the government's attention?

I am very unhappy with the announcement of the water and sewer crown corporation. Next year, the Ministry of the Environment will lose \$341 million of its budget to the corporation through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The corporation will pass on the costs of sewer and water construction to the municipalities, users and developers. This is how the Liberal government balances its budget—by downloading costs to municipalities and their ratepayers.

The corporation will be allowed to use lot levies collected to cover the costs of new development. This will raise the price of new homes and lean the corporation towards new development rather than infrastructure renewal.

I will, however, congratulate the government on one thing: taking the advice of our party four years ago to move the Niagara Escarpment Commission from Municipal Affairs to the Environment portfolio. It is about time the government gave priority to conserving the escarpment rather than developing it.

HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr D. R. Cooke: Once again last night, as I have regularly for many years, along with about 6,000 other Kitchenerites, I enjoyed another thrilling Ontario Hockey League game as the Kitchener Rangers defeated the Oshawa Generals three to two to take a commanding three-games-to-one lead in the OHL finals.

As members know, the Rangers run by far the best Junior A franchise in Canada, the most successful one in so far as membership is concerned. As I watch National Hockey League hockey, I am always reminded that every team in that league is dominated by OHL graduates. This year the Rangers, typically, have been underestimated. They were not listed among the 10 top teams in Canada for most of the year, yet it is obvious now that they are on their way to the Memorial Cup.

Joe McDonell, our coach and general manager, started three years ago, at the age of 25, as the youngest Junior A coach in Canada. Last year the Rangers topped the OHL standings and Joe was chosen as coach of the OHL all-stars.

The Rangers are a subscriber-owned team. There are 40 directors elected by those of us who are subscribers, so it is a very democratic team—we do not have a Yolanda Ballard to contend with—and the team plays good hockey. I am sure that all members of the Legislature will join me in congratulating and wishing continued good luck to Joe McDonell and the Rangers.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

LONG-TERM CARE

SOINS DE LONGUE DURÉE

Hon Mr Beer: On behalf of myself and my colleagues the Minister of Health, the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons and the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs, I am pleased to inform this House of our implementation plans for long-term care, plans that will make major changes in both facilities and in-home services and will allow elderly people and people with disabilities to stay in their own homes in communities as long as possible.

Je suis heureux de pouvoir informer l'Assemblée de nos projets de mise en oeuvre des soins de longue durée, projets qui auront des incidences importantes, tant dans les établissements qu'à domicile, et qui permettront aux personnes âgées et aux personnes handicapées de demeurer chez elles au sein de leur communauté aussi longtemps que possible.

À l'intérieur des établissements, nous offrirons des choix plus étendus aux clients, et le nouveau système à point d'accès unique permettra aux bénéficiaires de trouver tous les services qu'ils recherchent en un seul lieu.

La publication hier du budget de la province nous permet maintenant d'octroyer les fonds voulus pour traduire nos plans en mesures concrètes.

I want to underline the significance of these changes. Over the next six years, we will be investing a total of \$2 billion in new money in the long-term care system. By the fiscal year 1996-97, new funding will rise to \$640 million annually. Of these new dollars, an estimated \$460 million will come directly from the provincial government, while \$180 million will be recovered through co-payments from consumers.

In the current fiscal year, we shall dedicate \$52 million to the reform of long-term care in Ontario. In September, money will begin flowing to enhance community-based, long-term care services. Let me mention a few: \$10.9 million will go to improve wages and benefits paid to homemakers; \$7.4 million to homemaking agencies to help them cover the costs of providing services; \$7.4 million will fund almost 1,000 new spaces in attendant care outreach and enhanced supported living; \$4 million will go to agencies providing home support, Alzheimer's programs and to elderly persons' centres to improve and expand their services; \$10 million will be available immediately to provide community supports and in-home services such as home care where these are urgently needed.

1350

The balance of the \$52 million will be spent in establishing single-access agencies and developing other elements of the reformed long-term care system.

This funding is in addition to the 5.5 per cent increase for social service agencies that I announced earlier this month, and an additional \$6.1 million to be allocated to improve salaries and benefits for attendant care and home support workers. This is part of the agency compensation package outlined in yesterday's budget.

As members know, many people in long-term care facilities or in the community currently pay all or part of the costs of services provided to them. We are going to continue this policy, but people who cannot afford to pay will not be required to pay any portion of the costs of services they receive. I believe this is fair and compassionate.

These consumer co-payments will not apply to health or personal care. Co-payments, based on ability to pay, will apply only to housekeeping and other similar services, community support services such as Meals on Wheels, and the cost of accommodation in facilities, all of which, of course, is presently done.

The principle of affordability will be honoured for all who make use of the long-term care system. Those individuals with incomes of approximately \$20,000 will not pay any portion of the cost of these community services. Those people with moderate incomes will pay on a sliding scale. We anticipate that only those people with incomes in excess of \$50,000 will pay the full cost of community services.

In facilities, residents will continue to pay towards the cost of their accommodation. Again, only those who can pay will pay. This policy recognizes the high cost of providing long-term care services while ensuring that people who need those services receive them, whether they can pay for them or not.

As part of the implementation of long-term care reform, my ministry and the Ministry of Health have formed the new community health and support services division.

This new division brings together for the first time such programs as community health, public health, community mental health and health promotion, as well as policy and operations units to support long-term care. Now it is time to begin working with our partners in the community, activating the plans we have made.

Last December I announced that we would complete a strategic plan by spring to identify subjects that require further consultation and to put local planning activities in place. That plan is scheduled for release in mid-May, thanks to co-operation among the communities, district health councils and area offices.

We will implement changes in some communities by September. Community-government working groups will begin working on specific program design within the next two to three weeks.

We are well on our way. We made a major commitment to reform long-term care, to provide the resources needed by our elderly citizens and people with physical disabilities. We are fulfilling that pledge.

The goal is within view and we shall attain it. In the future, senior citizens and people with disabilities will be better able to retain their dignity and to live as they wish in their homes and communities, close to friends and families.

BUSINESS INVESTMENT INCENTIVES

Hon R. F. Nixon: In yesterday's budget, I announced the doubling of the Ontario current cost adjustment to enhance Ontario's competitive position.

New business investment is vital to Ontario's future industrial competitiveness. New investment means our economy

is growing, our technology is being updated and our productive processes are being improved. One of the major long-term benefits is that new investment strengthens the foundation on which Ontario's social and economic programs are built.

Business investment in plant and equipment has been the fastest-growing component of the provincial economy in recent years, reaching \$31.4 billion in 1989. This year we expect it to remain the leading sector of the economy, expanding by an estimated 6.1 per cent in real terms.

However, this rate is down from the average 12.2 per cent growth over the previous two years. Rising interest rates and a high Canadian dollar are challenging our ability to compete in US markets and threatening to undermine our attractiveness to new investors.

Therefore, the government is improving tax incentives for investment in manufacturing machinery and equipment to ensure that business investment in Ontario remains strong.

The doubling of the Ontario current cost adjustment rate to 30 per cent provides an additional deduction from income for Ontario tax purposes. The adjustment is based on the level of investment in manufacturing machinery and equipment.

The improvements announced in Tuesday's budget will raise the level of annual support provided through the current cost adjustment for investment in new manufacturing machinery and equipment and pollution control equipment to \$280 million.

The doubling of the current cost adjustment to 30 per cent reaffirms Ontario's position as one of the most competitive locations for new manufacturing investment in North America.

Our corporate tax system combines a low burden for health care, social security and unemployment insurance, with an income tax that features attractive incentives for new investment.

The enhanced incentive should send a clear signal to the province's business community and potential investors that Ontario is an attractive location for new investment and that our businesses are prepared to compete in the global economy.

APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF JUDGE

Hon Mr Scott: As Attorney General of Ontario it gives me great pleasure to announce to the House today the appointment of Sidney Bryan Linden as the Chief Judge of Ontario's provincial court (criminal division). Chief Judge Linden was nominated as a judge of the provincial court (criminal division) by the Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee.

I am also pleased to announce that upon the proclamation of Bill 2, which merges the provincial court (criminal division) and the provincial court (family division), Chief Judge Linden will become the Chief Judge of the newly merged court.

It is appropriate to note that Chief Judge Linden replaces Chief Judge Frederick C. Hayes, who was appointed a district court judge 12 April 1990. Chief Judge Hayes has, as I have noted elsewhere, given stellar service to the court and to the public for many years, and he is entitled to the thanks of the province and the public he has served with such dedication.

Throughout his career, the new Chief Judge has distinguished himself as an innovative reformer, a pragmatic administrator and a conscientious and principled adjudicator. These qualities will prove invaluable in his new role.

I have every confidence that Chief Judge Linden will rise to the historic challenges we face in reforming our court system. Under his leadership, major court reform initiatives and delay reduction projects will streamline the administration of justice in Ontario.

Chief Judge Linden brings with him a proven commitment to improving the justice process in Ontario. He has played a crucial role in the successful implementation of a number of innovative programs and initiatives.

Most recently, as Ontario's first Information and Privacy Commissioner, Mr Linden has established the province's first appeal process to review decisions made by government institutions. His work has been critical to ensuring a more open government and affirming the protection of individual privacy.

As executive director of the Canadian Auto Workers' legal services plan, Mr Linden was instrumental in establishing Ontario's first major pre-paid legal services scheme. As the public complaints commissioner and chairman of the Police Complaints Board, he established and successfully administered a new system for handling complaints against the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force. Chief Judge Linden is already recognized as a leader in the field of civilian review of law enforcement.

In his other roles as project director of the Toronto bail project, general counsel and executive director of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association and in private practice, Chief Judge Linden established his commitment to improving the administration of justice in Ontario. Indeed, since being called to the bar he has been unwavering in his contributions to the development of a more accessible system in the province.

His vision, dedicated service and outstanding abilities are assets that will help us meet the challenges of the 1990s. On behalf of the citizens of Ontario and all the members of the assembly, I would like to congratulate Chief Judge Linden and welcome him to his new position.

1400

RESPONSES

APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF JUDGE

Mr B. Rae: I want to join in the congratulations expressed today by the Attorney General to Chief Judge Sidney Linden. We look forward to working with him. We have all worked with him in the past in his various responsibilities. He is a man of great good humour and great ability. We look forward to working with him in his new role on the unified court.

BUSINESS INVESTMENT INCENTIVES

Mr Laughren: I want to respond briefly to the Treasurer's statement on the Ontario current cost adjustment doubling. I found it strange that this is the one tax expenditure the Treasurer decided to rise at his place today and talk about as the follow-up on his budget.

There is another tax expenditure that, as most members know, is money the government does not collect because of an exemption. He did not talk about the income tax reduction of \$38 million. Is that because the Treasurer felt a little strange about announcing \$140 million of new money to the corporate sector and \$38 million of new money to look after those who are most needy in our society? Is that why the Treasurer chose to pick only one and not talk about the other expenditure he announced in his budget statement yesterday?

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Allen: I want to respond to the announcement by the Minister of Community and Social Services on the subject of long-term care. Let me first address one minor particular and then go to the larger subject.

I am sure that the visiting homemakers will be glad to see another few dollars flowing into their pockets as a result of this particular reform and the \$10.9 million that will improve their wages and benefits. I only want to note that the 6,000 homemakers out there, if you take an example of a single mother who has two children, will now be a little bit closer to the poverty line as a result of this announcement.

In one respect it is difficult to assess this announcement. The ministry talks in terms of billions of dollars over half a dozen years of time. It talks about the merging of various programs from various ministries into a single long-term care program. One would have to analyse what programs are being displaced, what guidelines are being applied and how people will access this in detail to be able specifically to critique it with any real solidity.

Yet I think all of us will remember the years we went through hearing about the problems of an aging population and the need for integrated service. We got the integrated homemakers program. We got a few of those established. Running into the last election—I note there is an election coming up; there is a lot of talk of that in the air—we heard that the existing centres were going to be expanded, that there would be 10 more integrated homemakers programs, and that then after that there would be another 10 and we would complete the whole provincial cycle.

Suddenly, what happened? People began to use the program, and the government panicked and said, "We have to put a cap on this thing." The next thing they said was, "We have to restrain the guidelines and we have to limit the qualifications." That whole program has been on hold ever since the last election. There has not been one new integrated homemakers unit established across this province since the last election.

One has to ask oneself just how serious this exercise is. Is this another piece of another election program, another glowing promise, another multi-year endeavour, another grandiose announcement that gives the impression this government will be here for ever and will do all those great, marvellous Technicolor programs that we have been hearing about in recent years and in recent months? I will believe it when I see it.

Mr Reville: Further to the remarks by my colleague the member for Hamilton West, the improvements to the wages of homemakers, I think, amount to about \$1 an hour for a homemaker. I do not believe this government should feel it can buy an election for \$1 an hour. The \$4 million that is going to home support agencies is a payback from money that was cut from the 1988 budget. It was \$4.3 million. I figure they owe us \$0.3 million on 1988 still.

APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF JUDGE

Mr Pope: On behalf of our Progressive Conservative Party, I would like to add our own comments on the appointment of Chief Judge Linden. As the Attorney General quite rightly pointed out, he is a man of obvious experience and ability who will bring, I think, much credit to the position he will occupy.

We want to express our best wishes to him as he begins his new duties and our thanks to him for agreeing to make this commitment to the public of Ontario as Chief Judge of the unified court. We know he will do his work well, as he has done everything in the past that he has been involved in. We wish him all the best in his work to improve the court system for the benefit of all residents of the province of Ontario and thank the Attorney General for that appointment.

BUSINESS INVESTMENT INCENTIVES

Mr Pope: On the other hand, I have to say to the Treasurer, nice try, but it will take more than one statement from the Treasurer to improve the reputation that this government has vis-à-vis the investment climate and investment opportunity in North America.

We have already heard John Bulloch of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business saying that Ontario has the most antibusiness government in Canada. We have already seen recent reports that have concluded that Ontario is the worst jurisdiction in North America in which to locate auto parts manufacturing facilities. We have seen 34,000 jobs lost in the manufacturing sector in Ontario in the last year alone.

The Treasurer's own budget shows a slackening in the creation of jobs in the province. It shows a rise in the rate of unemployment. It shows economic growth, even at the rosiest, growing 1.7 per cent, and the announcement of the Treasurer today even casts doubt on the 1.7 per cent that he was trumpeting just yesterday.

It is true that this government must take initiatives to encourage private sector investment in Ontario. The damage has been done by this government and its anti-business, anti-investment measures, its tax regime installed over the past three years with \$2.6 billion in tax grabs. We are now paying the price for it in slackened investment, slackened economic opportunity and reduced job opportunities that all people in Ontario are suffering from.

We have seen the chicanery of this Treasurer yesterday, using accounting gymnastics to the tune of \$1.2 billion, trying to say that he balanced his budget when we know he has not. Without those accounting allocations, he is at a \$1-billion deficit and he knows it; they are unique and unexplained accounting allocations.

We now see that he is going to treat the manufacturing sector in a way that he will not treat the mining sector in this province. If the Treasurer would encourage the same kind of investment in the mining sector by using the Ontario income tax regime, we would not be forced to go with the halfhearted efforts that were announced yesterday to aid the mining communities in northern Ontario. It is not good enough. It is not going to do the trick.

The Treasurer is known as being anti-investment, anti-business and anti-economic-growth. He has done it with his own tax policies to the tune of \$2.6 billion and he is not going to change it with one announcement today.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mrs Marland: If there is one thing this Liberal government is a world champion in, it is reannouncements. That is all they keep doing, reannouncing, and then they cancel the programs when they find they are too expensive.

I want to say that those agencies, like the Victorian Order of Nurses, the Saint Elizabeth Visiting Nurses Association of Ontario and the Red Cross homemakers, who had to go with their backs to the wall last year, almost to the point of cancelling their programs, will not be convinced that these wage and benefit improvements are going to solve their problems. If you are going to offload the responsibility for health care on to community-based services, you have to make sure they exist. We hope this minister will make a real commitment to fulfilling this announcement, and not have it be just another announcement.

The fact of the matter is that this government is in court. It is in court in a case that it has no business being in. I give the example of the Mary Mather case. That is a situation where it has failed to deal fairly with seniors in terms of their long-term care facilities.

The truth is that the Treasurer speaks of expanding services, of broadening the base of support services. However, in his budget he stated yesterday that the government expects a greater level of financial contribution from seniors in need of chronic care.

The people of this province will not be fooled by these announcements that come out prior to an election. They are far smarter than this government gives them credit for.

1410

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr B. Rae: I have a question today for the Treasurer. I am sure the Treasurer will understand the feelings of millions of people in this province who feel that they are being subjected to an extraordinarily unfair tax in the form of the goods and services tax by the federal Conservative Party.

The Minister of Finance of British Columbia also produced a balanced budget—one might say also produced a balanced budget with perhaps similar political aims in mind. The Minister of Finance of British Columbia, a member of a government which I had never before regarded as being in the forefront of progressive activity, had this to say with respect to the GST:

"This tax is unacceptable to British Columbia. Mr Speaker, a tax on a tax is unfair. I am announcing today that when the GST is implemented, the provincial tax will not apply on top of the federal tax; the provincial tax will apply to prices excluding the federal tax."

The Treasurer could have made a similar announcement yesterday if he were really opposed to the goods and services tax. My simple question is, why did he not?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The answer is that such a statement would have cost the consolidated revenue fund of the province \$600 million, and anyone who suggests that we should not continue the procedure that has been established here since sales tax began in 1961 must surely be in favour of raising the sales tax by about 0.6 per cent. It does not make sense that we would do that.

I would love to announce a reduction of all the taxes, but the honourable members know that we have a continuing and expanding responsibility to pay for our services in a fair and equitable way. I hope that is a clear and sufficient answer to the honourable member's comment.

Mr B. Rae: The Treasurer cannot have it both ways. He cannot, try as he might. The hard fact of the matter is that the Liberal government of Ontario has commissioned a poll saying, "How can we add on to the GST?" That is the government's poll, nobody else's. The government commissioned a poll asking that question, and when presented with a choice as to whether it would or would not add its taxes on to the GST, it made the decision that the money was better off in its pocket than in the pockets of consumers across Ontario. That is the government's decision.

If, as he says, he has no plans and indeed will never have any plans to integrate the GST with his sales tax—and I cannot wait to see him continue to say that—if he is so opposed to the GST, why would he not recognize the unfairness of adding the government's tax on the tax when the Treasurer himself is saying it is worth \$600 million to the government?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I was first elected in 1962 and was somewhat critical of the government of the day for establishing a three per cent sales tax.

On the other hand, this tax has grown in its size and breadth to the point where I would be the first to say it is the most unpopular tax we have, but it returns \$9 billion to the provincial Treasury. This is a substantial amount towards paying for the costs of a wide variety of programs in all parts of the province and in every area of provincial responsibility and endeavour.

Ever since the first, the sales tax has been the obvious, last, publicly exposed tax. It must by law be applied at the end of every bill and will continue to be done so.

The honourable member must be well aware that, while we have a productive tax system, we believe that it is fair and equitable. It has an additional virtue, and that is that it pays our bills, and we have now had two balanced budgets, with the first reduction in the debt in 43 years.

On that basis, I see my responsibility as Treasurer as not only to report to the people and this House as to the economic position of the province but as to our spending programs and how we are going to pay the bills. In yesterday's budget, I indicated how we are going to do that. We are going to pay our bills this year. We are going to pay them all. We are going to end up with a small surplus and we are going to reduce our deficit.

Mr B. Rae: The Treasurer would rather live off the avails of the goods and services tax, which is exactly what he is doing, than have a tax system that is fair. He is hiding a \$600-million tax increase from the consumers of Ontario faced with the GST and he is hiding that \$600-million tax increase by putting a tax on a tax.

I say to the Treasurer again, if he were really opposed to the GST, he would not be adding the eight per cent retail sales tax on to the GST. If he is so interested in a fair tax system and he is so worried about the economy of Ontario and he recognizes that we are heading for a recession, why is he taking \$600 million out of the pockets of consumers of Ontario when they are faced with the most unfair tax in Canadian history in the form of the goods and services tax?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am interested in the blinding light that has converted the honourable member. He used to be the budget critic in Ottawa on matters of federal finance. He must surely have been aware, if he is sensitive at all, that the federal tax of 13.5 per cent is embedded in many of the goods that are taxed in Ontario.

Obviously, he wants to take his lead from Mr Couvelier, the Treasurer of British Columbia. It will be interesting to see just what the impact of his decision is.

As for us, we continue to have a sales tax that is well understood. Nobody loves it, but it is productive and effective in meeting our provincial responsibilities.

In that regard, I want to say very clearly that there is no \$600-million windfall and the fact that the NDP persists in repeating this in material that is totally incorrect is an indication of its irresponsibility.

Mr B. Rae: It is not incorrect. You yourself said it.

Hon Mr Scott: Try again, Bob. I think you bombed out there. Let's have another one now. Second batter up; first one out.

The Speaker: Order. I think it is time for a second question.

TAXATION

Mr Laughren: Could the Treasurer tell us why, after his sixth budget, a single person in this province earning the minimum wage of \$5 an hour still has to pay provincial income taxes of about \$360 a year?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I know the honourable member would like the House to also recall the fact that in yesterday's budget an additional \$44 million was allocated to our tax reduction program, which means that 115,000 families with low incomes and with children will be relieved of an additional \$200 in taxes payable, and the same is true of anyone who is disabled and who is cared for in the home. We feel we have moved along with a number of initiatives to relieve the tax burdens on low-income people.

As a matter of fact, this is the first year they have not had to pay either all or part of their OHIP premiums, and there is a clear \$1-billion improvement to the taxpayers of the province this year in that regard.

I think the member will also go through the budget carefully and refer to other advantages that have accrued to low-income people, working or otherwise, which I will continue to list as the honourable member proceeds with his comments.

1420

Mr Laughren: The Treasurer did not tell me how he justifies someone earning \$5 an hour in Ontario paying \$360 a year in provincial income taxes. He did not alter that fact one iota in yesterday's budget statement, not one iota, that single person earning \$5 an hour paying \$360 a year in provincial income taxes. Yesterday's budget did absolutely nothing for that.

While he is trying to think of a way to justify that rather perverse tax policy, could the Treasurer tell us as well how he was able to dredge up only \$44 million—the figure he uses—for the income tax reduction plan when, at the same time, he was able to come up with \$660 million as a tax break for Ontario's wealthiest citizens because of his preferential treatment of the capital gains tax. How does he put those two things together and sleep at night?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member knows that we have a fair and equitable tax system, in spite of his views, and he is aware that there are substantial improvements, not only to low-income taxpayers but those who are unemployed, those who are in receipt of social assistance. In fact, we feel that it is an appropriate position in establishing a personal income tax regimen that its responsibilities are distributed.

In this particular instance, the honourable member would be aware that we are going to be getting close to \$14 billion from personal income tax sources. This is an important, and really the most important, basis for paying for all of our programs, in which all of the people participate.

Mr Laughren: The fact remains that the Treasurer has not been able to explain how he justifies someone earning \$5 an hour, the minimum wage in the province, paying \$360 a year in provincial income tax. I await his response at some future time perhaps.

Let me get this straight. The Treasurer is telling us that despite the \$660-million windfall to people with capital gains, despite the \$140-million current cost adjustment, which he just reiterated in his statement a few minutes ago, compared to the \$38 million—I think it is a \$38-million expenditure for those at low incomes, not the \$44 million; that is a full-year figure—

despite those facts, this is the Treasurer's concept of tax fairness in Ontario. Is that correct?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member would know that since we took office, we have removed 500,000 individuals from the tax rolls, people who normally pay personal income tax. We have moved in the tax reduction program in a way that is appropriate and widely supported in the province. The fact that it is not fast enough for the honourable member is a source of continuing regret for me, but these are the facts.

EASTERN ONTARIO

Mr Runciman: My question is to the Treasurer as well, and it has to do with his ignoring of eastern Ontario in his recent budget tabled yesterday, the fact that he did not mention it at all.

I want to advise the House that we have a recently revised atlas, the Peterson-Nixon atlas for eastern Ontario and the rest of Ontario. Members of the House will notice there is nothing in the east; it is vacant. The Liberal government does not know where eastern Ontario is, apparently, if you look at the budget tabled yesterday. It simply does not exist: out of sight, out of mind, out of luck. Will the Treasurer explain to the people of eastern Ontario why he neglected to make any reference to eastern Ontario in his budget yesterday?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I think the honourable member should concentrate on his opposition to the goods and services tax in his re-election program, because he is the one who is brandishing in this House a map of Ontario with the eastern part of it shown blank. Certainly it is not blank in the minds of this government or this ministry.

The honourable member would know that the allocations for roads, for schools, for new hospitals and for a wide range of programs have recognized the needs of eastern Ontario and its many fine centres, from Kingston to Cornwall and to Ottawa, and even Brockville. The citizens in those areas are very well involved and very generously involved in the wide variety of programs made available.

Mr Runciman: It is a wonder the Treasurer can keep a straight face when he delivers that kind of response. We can talk about 12 deaths on Highway 17 this year. We can talk about the closure of five parks by the St Lawrence Parks Commission.

This is an old case. This government has a Ministry of Northern Affairs. They have an assistant deputy minister for the north in the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology. They have two bureaucrats at the deputy level for Metro Toronto. And—the appointment to end all appointments—they have an adviser to the Premier on eastern Europe. Eastern Ontario does not have a ministry; it does not have a deputy; it does not have an ADM; and it certainly does not have an adviser to the Premier.

I want to ask the minister how he can get up in this House and justify that they are making a contribution to eastern Ontario. It is not clearly indicated in this budget or ones of the past, and it certainly is not indicated by the actions of the government in appointing a senior bureaucrat to advise the Premier and cabinet on concerns in eastern Ontario.

Hon R. F. Nixon: It is surprising to me that the honourable member is advocating the hiring of more bureaucrats. I do not think it is very practical myself.

But the honourable member seems somehow to feel that eastern Ontario is not sharing in the buoyant economy of this

province. I do not believe that that is the case. It is not appropriate for me to talk about the new sewage development in Ottawa commanding the largest share of the capital that is available this year, or the speeded-up commitment for Highway 417 or the busway, or the fact that there are developments in all parts of the province in the eastern area, including Napanee. I believe that the only vacancy as far as blankness is concerned is in the area of Leeds because of the inadequate representation of the honourable member.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I would not want to have to make the member for Leeds-Grenville shout.

Mr Runciman: In respect to that last comment, my dad once advised me to never get into a peeing contest with a skunk, so I am not going to make a reaction to this.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The exchange may sound funny; it does not to me.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Scott: Ask us something we can talk about. Tell us about the GST and all is forgiven.

The Speaker: Order. Is the Attorney General finished? Thank you.

Mr Runciman: The minister is boasting. We have not heard him mention the economic development fund that they announced on a grandiose scale a number of years ago. They have spent \$3 million in the past three years. At the same time, the greater Toronto area office of this government will spend \$2.5 million this year alone. They spent \$24 million on the Ontario Film Development Corp—more in one year than in eastern Ontario in five years. They have virtually given a blank cheque to the Toronto Olympics. They have committed \$70 million to an opera centre in Metropolitan Toronto.

I would like to have the Treasurer respond to the people of this region: Why is this kind of spending more important than creating jobs in eastern Ontario? Why is that kind of spending more important to him and his government?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The Eastern Ontario Development Corp, as the honourable member has indicated, has a special fund with \$25 million available to assist the communities there in their efforts to improve their job opportunities and their expansion. The success has been quite phenomenal, and the honourable member is aware of that. His own city is one of the most prosperous, with he and his friends ensconced on the shore of the St Lawrence in their mansions as they watch their yachts bobbing at moor waiting for them to go out on a fishing trip.

When it comes to advice in eastern Ontario, the Premier and the members of the cabinet are very well served by our colleagues in the cabinet and the representation from eastern Ontario from the Liberal Party. We are very proud of this because it has been effective, it has been sensitive and it has cost a lot of money.

1430

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

DÉVELOPPEMENT DU NORD DE L'ONTARIO

Mr Eves: I have a question for the Minister of Northern Development. In view of the fact that there is not one single

new initiative in yesterday's budget for northern Ontario, is he satisfied that the problems of people in northern Ontario are being addressed?

L'hon M. Fontaine : En réponse à la question du député de Parry Sound, j'aimerais lui rappeler que je suis satisfait du budget parce que le Nord de l'Ontario y est couvert dans tous les domaines : la santé, les services sociaux, les transports, les fermiers, l'éducation, l'université. En plus, je voudrais lui rappeler qu'il y a bien des projets qui existent dans le Nord qui ont été mis en place il y a un an et demi ou deux ans.

M. Pouliot : Dans quelles circonscriptions ?

L'hon M. Fontaine : Dans toutes les circonscriptions, pour aider la diversification de l'industrie du Nord et leur donner un avenir plus encourageant, qui existait déjà il y a cinq à six ans.

Mr Eves: Those are all very interesting facts, but the question has not been addressed. The question was in regard to the fact that there is not one single new initiative that this government has made towards northern Ontario in this budget that was introduced yesterday. There are some serious problems in northern Ontario, as I am sure the minister is more than aware.

Dofasco in Kirkland Lake has recently laid off 700 people. Closing this mine is going to eliminate over \$40 million in revenue to that community alone. Dofasco is also shutting down an iron ore mine in Temagami. Virginiatown is losing its major employer, a gold mine. Hearst faces bankruptcy of another log mill, and last year we saw a mill close there, putting 300 people out of work. The Algoma iron ore mine in Wawa faces closure and the town of Marathon is also facing the proposed loss of a proposed pulp project.

What specific action is the minister taking or did he recommend to this Treasurer to take in yesterday's budget, and where is it in the budget?

L'hon M. Fontaine : Premièrement, je ne peux pas comprendre la question du député de Parry Sound parce que—I guess it has only been a few months he has been part of the north. Maybe that is why he did not look at what we did the last four years, before today's economic problem.

First of all, the member for Parry Sound did nothing when he was there for northern Ontario either, so he should not give me a lesson. Parry Sound was not even in northern Ontario. We put it in. He had a small budget for the roads, about \$55 million. Today we have \$130 million for roads. We have the northern Ontario heritage fund. We have got the communications going. We have communication with the municipalities and with the federal government.

Today, the problem in northern Ontario is not a provincial problem; it is the monetary problem of this country, which is directed by Mr Wilson and Mr Crow. That is the problem with northern Ontario, the high interest rate and the high dollar. That is all.

Mr Eves: I am glad the minister brought up a couple of those subjects. If he wants to talk about the northern Ontario heritage fund which was announced, \$30 million a year was supposed to be spent. The last two years, he has spent a total of \$5 million out of the \$60 million. Where did the other \$55 million go? He talks about \$55 million for roads in the north and he is proud of that. His colleague the Minister of Transportation announced a couple of weeks ago a \$5-billion program for Metropolitan Toronto. What is the minister worth? Where is his \$5 billion for northern Ontario?

Hon Mr Fontaine: I do not have to take anything from the member for Parry Sound, because the mayor wrote me some letters of congratulation, telling me that I was doing the best job for the construction of highways. Why should I take that from the member?

I would like to remind the member of when we took over the government. I would like to say where Highway 69 was. At least we are spending millions of dollars on this highway, which they did not do when they were there, and it was the time in the 1960s and the 1970s to rebuild that highway, not in 1980. We were 10 years late in building highways in the member's area on account of his government. Their budget was as low as the 1972 budget for transportation.

I would like to remind you, Mr Speaker, that the Via cuts were not our initiative. The cuts originated in Ottawa, and we are going to try to revive the night train to give a chance of better transportation.

Another thing I would like to remind—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. New question. I am trying to give other members an opportunity to ask questions.

Mr Hampton: My question is for the Treasurer. I appreciate all that the Minister of Northern Development had to say. The fact of the matter is that the memo from the Deputy Minister of Northern Development, Brock Smith, to the cabinet secretary was dated 11 January 1990. In other words, on 11 January his government had all of the information that has been listed here already: mine closures in Kirkland Lake, mine closures in Elliot Lake, the risk to important industry in North Bay, further closures in Temagami and problems in Thunder Bay with that as a transportation centre. All of these things were known to his government as of 11 January. His government in this budget gives some very nice tax breaks to big business in southern Ontario—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. With respect, this is not the media studio. I have listened to the preamble to the question. I am sure you will have a question.

Mr Hampton: Given all that his government knew, and it knew it some time ago, why is there nothing in this budget to address the growing unemployment problems in northern Ontario and the growing problems of the northern Ontario economy?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member is aware of what is being provided for the north by way of economic stimulation and assistance to the people. The honourable member is aware that the northern Ontario heritage fund received, without even a mention in the budget this year, an additional \$30 million, which is about \$100 million that has gone there in three years, which is spent directly under the control of northerners for the benefit of the economy there.

The honourable member is aware that over the past two years, and continuing this year, we are providing for 1,600 to 1,700 permanent civil service jobs in the north, together with the capital that goes to house those jobs and provide the infrastructure to make them effective; that there are six new buildings being built in the centres of the north from Thunder Bay right through to Timmins and North Bay, with Sault Ste Marie and Sudbury being strongly featured. This is a capital commitment of an additional \$300 million.

The honourable member is aware of our road program, which fair people and perceptive people realize is effectively serving the needs of the north; that education is expanding and improving; that our colleges and our universities are—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Hampton: It is interesting that the Treasurer always refers to the 1,600 civil service jobs, which it is true are going to Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Sault Ste Marie and Timmins. I sometimes think that is about as far as his scope of northern Ontario extends.

Let me just raise with the Treasurer another issue. The Northwestern Ontario Chambers of Commerce, the Northwestern Ontario Tourism Association and many MPPs have asked him to lower the gas tax rate in northern Ontario because it renders all of the products we bring in higher in price and much of what we send out becomes higher in price. If he could give \$140 million to big business in southern Ontario, why could he not have at least lowered the gas tax so that what we produce is a little more competitive on the world market?

1440

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member knows that the government already provides licences to drive cars at a reduced rate, at half the standard rate, and that the actual price of the gas, which is normally provided to me in my briefing book, is just as it has been every other time it has been raised an average of a cent per litre, or perhaps two cents at the most, over what the costs are elsewhere.

The fact that there are long distances there—and the honourable member may feel that he has to drive from home to Emo or Thunder Bay—is an indication that one would certainly have additional travelling responsibilities. We try to make up for that in a fair way by providing drivers' licences at half price.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr Villeneuve: My question is also to the Treasurer. The Treasurer knows that farmers in this province are not doing very well. Farm cash receipts are down, net farm cash receipts are down and realized net farm income is down again this year for the third year in a row. Why did the Treasurer and his government not provide long-term interest relief instead of just a one-year shot to get them over this election?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I can understand the cynicism of the honourable member, being a member of the party that he is, when he would think that anything is done just simply to get people over a rough political period. This is not so. The honourable member will know that in the five years we have been in office our assistance to farmers by way of direct programs has been increased by well over 100 per cent.

The fact that the honourable member has been pushing for interest rate assistance simply reflects what others have said from the New Democratic Party and what others have said from the Liberal Party and what the Minister of Agriculture and Food has indicated is the feeling across the province. That is why it is in the budget, and it is \$48 million to provide that assistance as the farmers face the challenges that the honourable member is aware of as well as anyone.

Mr Villeneuve: Transfer payments to farmers, for instance, in the 1988-89 fiscal year were reduced by \$51 million. That is a very substantial amount of money, and that is from the government that the Treasurer tells us has done marvels and wonders for farmers—a \$51-million cutback.

The prices of grains right now are less than they were 10 years ago and the cost of operation has gone up tremendously. With 75,000 farmers in Ontario, \$48 million is slightly more than \$600 per farm. Does the Treasurer think that \$600 per farm is sufficient?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member must surely in his experience know some farmers who are still prosperous and who are having success in meeting their community and family responsibilities. This money is focused on those who are victims of the high interest rate policy of the government of Canada, which is of course felt by farmers as well as by people in any endeavour. This money is designed to assist them in those unexpectedly high interest requirements as they finance their crops and go forward to being as productive as they possibly can.

The honourable member asks if it is sufficient. I would tell him that in the last five years we have more than doubled the programs that are designed to assist farmers.

The honourable member also is aware that on a world scale, farmers are having significant difficulty in meeting the low prices at the world level. It sometimes gives us all concern when we hear of people starving in other places of the world, at a time when because of pricing and the economics of the situation our farmers are only producing at probably 25 per cent of their capability.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mr Kanter: I have a question for the Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues. Several recent surveys have indicated that an increasing number of people feel unsafe walking in their neighbourhoods at night. A recent Gallup poll and a study just released by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics both show that women who live in large cities are most likely to be concerned about their personal safety. Can the minister advise what the Ontario government is doing to make women feel safer on our streets?

Hon Mrs Wilson: My ministry is working on an integrated strategy with other ministries. The government recently announced \$28.8 million in funds to address the problems of sexual assault. This indicates this government's firm commitment to reducing the incidence of violence against women.

Our comprehensive three-part plan was developed by a provincial committee of 13 ministries. It includes services to victims, justice initiatives, prevention and education. I believe this integrated strategy means this government has recognized the need to decrease sexual violence against women on our streets.

Mr Kanter: I thank the minister for the information about the government strategy. But I want to point out to her that in my riding a community-based group called the Annex Women's Action Committee is working very hard producing a pamphlet entitled *Women Protecting Themselves*, to help women live safely in downtown Toronto and other downtown communities.

Clearly, I believe that the government must work in partnership with community groups like the Annex Women's Action Committee to prevent violence against women. Could I ask the minister how the government is encouraging this partnership?

Hon Mrs Wilson: The government has encouraged this partnership by meaningful assistance. What do I mean by "meaningful"? I mean over \$1.7 million in funds to raise awareness and change attitudes about sexual assault.

Assistance will also be provided to help communities develop strategies and local networks to co-ordinate activities and services which are related to sexual assault. Also, grants to community organizations of over \$200,000 per year acknowledge the important role of local communities in raising public awareness and dispelling the myths that surround sexual assault.

Changing attitudes and raising awareness are the first important steps in reducing the incidence of sexual assault against women.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr D. S. Cooke: I have a question to the Treasurer. The most glaring omission of his budget yesterday is in the area of housing. I would like to ask the Treasurer how he could possibly justify no new program to provide housing in this province when the facts are clear that in this city there are 10,000 to 20,000 people who are homeless; that there are 41,000 households, representing 71,000 people in this province, on waiting lists for assisted housing; that the apartment vacancy rate across the province is 0.8 per cent and one third of the tenants of this province are paying over 30 per cent of their monthly income on housing.

Why has he written all those people off in this province and not continued with a housing program when it is so desperately needed in Ontario today?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member will recall the debates in this House. When the government first took office, the honourable member for Scarborough North and the honourable member for Oakwood were Housing ministers and established a broad and productive program of building housing of the rent-geared-to-income, subsidized, non-profit type.

We have established at least 30,000 new units, properly funded, and in the year coming up, there will be 10,000 more open. On a year-by-year basis of supporting those, we are getting close to \$1 billion—close to \$910 million—in the actual year-to-year support.

I would suggest to the member that these programs, which were inaugurated five years ago, four years ago and three years ago, are now very productive, developing these units in this community, in Toronto and across the province, and we are very proud of that accomplishment.

Mr D. S. Cooke: The Treasurer can throw out whatever statistics he wants. The fact of the matter is that his programs have not met the need. There are still homeless people in this province and people living in housing where they cannot afford those rents. Then, on the other hand, he taxes those same people while he gives money away to corporations.

The need is desperate in this province. While there have been some things accomplished in the last few years, the need is still desperate. The vacancy rates across this province are clear: Hamilton, 0.4 per cent; Toronto, 0.4 per cent; Oshawa, 0.2 per cent.

Why has the Treasurer written those people off when he knows that this is one social problem where, if the government had any integrity, it would be able to solve that problem over the next five or six years if he instituted another program? Why has he written those people off?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I do not agree with the honourable member that the problem would be solved in the next five years if we instituted another program. We have a wide variety of carefully constructed, well-thought-out and well-financed programs that are effectively providing rent-geared-to-income housing

and subsidized housing in all of these communities. We find that the programs have been quite spectacular in their success. As Treasurer, I have already indicated to the honourable member that the cost of supporting the programs on an ongoing basis, not a capital basis, is about \$900 million.

1450

Mr Brandt: My question is to the Treasurer—

Hon Mr Scott: Lockup ended yesterday.

Mr Brandt: My question could be to the Attorney General if he keeps this up.

SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

Mr Brandt: My question is in fact to the Treasurer. While we are talking about programs of spectacular success, I want to point out to him a program that has had less than spectacular success. That is the attention in the budget which he brought in yesterday that he has not given to an area of this province which at one time enjoyed a very buoyant economy and a great deal of success, and that is southwestern Ontario.

As a result of the auto layoffs and industrial restructuring that is going on in Sarnia, Chatham, Windsor and other areas of southwestern Ontario, the unemployment rate is increasing rather rapidly. Why would the Treasurer not do something for southwestern Ontario, recognizing that this part of the province is in need at the moment?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I think the honourable member should be well aware of the fact that the budget, being a classic and admirable example of fiscal responsibility, is surely one of the best things we can do to stimulate business confidence and to attract new investment into this provincial jurisdiction. Southwestern Ontario, where I live and where the honourable member lives, has been fortunate, perhaps more fortunate than the other areas in the province in the past, with this sort of expansion and job opportunities.

The honourable member knows that Toyota, Suzuki in conjunction with General Motors, and many other car manufacturers, including the traditional North American manufacturers, continue to invest money and are even now contemplating expansions which we certainly hope will come to this jurisdiction. That is one of the reasons why it is important for us to maintain the competitive stance we have had, which really means that capital around the world looks at Ontario as one of the most attractive places in which to expand or locate operations.

The honourable member will be aware that the budget plans and indicates that there will be about 61,000 to 64,000 new jobs established, and I would suggest to the honourable member that a large proportion of them will be in the geographic area which he and I represent.

Mr Brandt: As the Treasurer is aware, a hospital was promised for Windsor which has not yet come to pass. That particular community is suffering very directly from auto layoffs related to the slowdown in auto sales. My own community has suffered either complete shutdowns, as is the case with Holmes Foundry, or partial shutdowns and extensive layoffs with plants like Fiberglas Canada.

Yet at the same time as he is ignoring that part of southwestern Ontario, he gives \$5 billion to a new transit system for Toronto and a blank cheque to any overruns that are going to occur with respect to the Olympics. This is where most of the development is occurring now and where perhaps a little less attention might be given, recognizing that other parts of the

province are developing at a much slower rate and in fact are suffering from higher rates of unemployment.

Why would the Treasurer not give some attention to southwestern Ontario? Why is he ignoring it, as he ignored the north and eastern Ontario?

Hon R. F. Nixon: Our efforts to maintain economic buoyancy are made more difficult by the Progressive Conservative policy of high interest rates and the high value of the Canadian dollar. It was Progressive Conservative leadership that led us into the free trade agreement, which is probably having as much of an impact on the honourable member's city as it is anywhere else.

I think we are rather valiant in our attempts to see that in spite of these unnecessary and in many respects artificial pressures and tensions, Ontario is still an attractive place in which businesses should locate and expand. We are confident that they will do so and that our economy will continue to grow.

Hon Mr Scott: What are you guys going to do if Mulroney comes to your riding?

Mr Brandt: Welcome him as I would you, Ian.

Hon R. F. Nixon: It's that bad, is it?

Mr Brandt: For a brief visit.

Hon Mr Scott: I don't know what I'd do. I bet a lot of people are out of town for the day.

The Speaker: Would it be all right if I recognized another member to ask a question? Thank you.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANTS

Mr Kozyra: This question is to the Minister of Health. Recently the questions of two members of the opposition in the House have raised considerable concern and even more confusion in my home constituency of Port Arthur, in Thunder Bay. Specifically the confusion surrounds the assistance that is available to cancer patients as they have to travel in other centres in Ontario for treatment. Can the minister clarify this confusion by explaining just what assistance has been and is available to those people who have to travel for this treatment?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I would like to thank the member for Port Arthur for this question. As an advocate on behalf of his constituents, he has made a point of getting the facts, and I am pleased to share them with him today.

There are eight cancer treatment centres across the province. The Canadian Cancer Society offers a program to assist people in financial need with their travel and accommodation. This assistance is available to all those in financial need, whether they live in northern or southern Ontario, eastern or western Ontario, when they travel to the eight provincial regional cancer treatment centres.

Last fall, when we were experiencing pressure in downtown Toronto, the Princess Margaret Hospital, through the patient referral office, offered financial assistance to patients who had to travel to other centres—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Is the member for Lake Nipigon finished now?

Mr Pouliot: With due respect, Harry Smith's column in Thunder Bay—

The Speaker: Order. I asked if you were finished.

Mr Pouliot: Indeed.

The Speaker: You are? Fine, thank you.

Mr Kozyra: Can the minister explain for the benefit of northern residents what the relationship is between the program she has just described and the northern health travel grant program?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I hope the members of the opposition will listen to the answer, because I know how important this is to the people, not only of northern Ontario but of Ontario as well.

It is really important to note that the northern health travel grant program is distinct from the programs which I have outlined. The programs I outlined are available to all the people of Ontario and are administered by the Canadian Cancer Society and the Princess Margaret Hospital, and the Ministry of Health supports those two previous programs by reimbursing those organizations.

The northern travel grant program is especially important to the people of northern Ontario. As members know, it is a long-standing and successful program from the Ministry of Health. Northern residents have had and will continue to have this benefit for a wide range of treatments that go beyond the treatment of cancer. As well as our other policies, we are continuously reviewing the northern travel grant program and evaluating it to ensure that if we have the opportunity to improve it, as we do other programs, we will indeed ensure that it is as equitable as possible.

Mr Reville: The people of the north have told us how inadequate the northern health travel grant program is.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Reville: My question is to the Treasurer. The Treasurer today has shown us the future of long-term care in the province, and the future is \$180 million in user fees. Yet the communiqué that accompanies the budget documents says, "This long-term care reform is the most significant improvement since the introduction of medicare." How does the Treasurer get off comparing a user-pay program with medicare, which is free?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member knows the government, along with the opposition, and in fact the law of Canada, requires that health services be without direct charge. We support that concept and we have gone to bat for it on more than one occasion, and the honourable member knows that.

There are, however, already co-payment fees required for people in care, for the housekeeping aspects of that care. I think it has been made clear by the excellent statement by the Minister of Community and Social Services that no fees will be charged to those people who are without sufficient resources and, as a matter of fact, full fees will not be paid or required until the income is at the \$50,000 level, which I suggest to the honourable member is probably higher than even his own income.

It also is apparent that the expense of this program is very large indeed and, in order to see that it is going to be spread equitably to all parts of the province, the policy is that those who may pay and who can pay and who have incomes over \$50,000 will be required to pay not for the medical aspects, nor the drugs, nor the nursing, nor the doctor, but for the aspects of care provided in their own home of a housekeeping nature.

1500

Mr Reville: The Treasurer is trying to reassure us that if you cannot pay you will not pay. But this is the same Treasurer

who observes that a \$5 minimum wage in this city would require you to go to a food bank; the same Treasurer who likes to stop your \$360 in taxes for that same minimum wage which will require you to go to a food bank. He is saying we should rely on him to make sure that those who cannot pay do not pay. Give me a break.

Hon R. F. Nixon: In case there was a question there, I want to reiterate to the honourable member, who seems to be somewhat glassy-eyed in this particular area, that if he feels that those of us who have taxable incomes of \$50,000—and it would not include me—should have this home care provided free—not the doctor, not the nurse, not the drugs, but simply the housekeeping home care—then he is more a glassy-eyed socialist than I thought and, frankly, more so than I have ever met.

ASBESTOS IN SCHOOLS

Mr Jackson: I have a question for the Minister of Education. Given that the Minister of Health has recognized the risk associated with asbestos in our schools and given that the Minister of Labour has recognized the health risk to children with the presence of asbestos in our schools, can the minister indicate that he and his ministry equally recognize the risk to children and the danger they are in when they are exposed to asbestos in the air they breathe and that the necessary repairs will be made to our schools immediately?

Hon Mr Conway: As I have indicated to the House on previous occasions, the Ontario government in all respects takes very seriously its responsibilities in helping the community meet the challenge of asbestos abatement. At the Ministry of Education over the past number of years we have, through our capital plan, paid out something in the neighbourhood of \$40 million to help school boards deal with the asbestos problem.

I can assure my friend the member for Burlington South that we stand by, ready and willing to receive requests through the capital expenditure forecast submitted annually by school boards across the province to assist them in the most appropriate way in ensuring that the asbestos difficulty that has been identified is most appropriately dealt with.

Mr Jackson: I do not doubt that the minister is standing by, but he never picks up the phone and answers. The truth is that there are over \$200 million worth of these kinds of repairs and retrofits going on in schools all across Ontario that are not being supported by the government, that the taxpayers are paying completely out of their own pockets.

The Metropolitan Toronto School Board and Metro boards have indicated they have an immediate need of about \$64 million to deal with Harbourfront expansion and needs of schools for asbestos repairs and for updating of fire regulations, but with regard to the Treasurer's budget there is absolutely no reference in this budget for this year to assist school boards with the increased demands for renovation and repairs as it relates to asbestos. The minister has a standard—

The Speaker: The question?

Mr Jackson: In the budget there is money to remove asbestos from this building, the Ontario Legislature, for our protection, but the minister has no money in his budget for the protection of our—

The Speaker: Order. Do you have anything in your budget for the removal of asbestos?

Hon Mr Conway: On a day so beautiful as this when spring has arrived in all its splendour, what does one do with the kind of Social Credit nonsense that is being offered up by the third party?

Let me just say, non-provocatively, that this budget, under the leadership of this Treasurer, yet again provides hundreds of millions of dollars—\$300 million, to be specific—in the fifth year of the now \$1.5-billion commitment in provincial grants from Queen's Park to assist school boards from Burlington to Barry's Bay with their real needs, needs that were not met by the antediluvian Tories, who had responsibilities for all those years and did so very little.

LAYOFFS

Miss Roberts: My question today is for the Minister of Labour. Recently it was announced that some 50 employees at the Clevite elastomer plant in St Thomas would lose their jobs as a result of the company moving its assembly operation to the United States. Like the many workers in assembly plants in my riding, I am very concerned about this type of activity, which is seen to be a direct result of the free trade agreement.

Can the minister please tell me and inform the House today what programs or services are available to help these 50 employees when they find themselves out of a job, unemployed, on 1 June of this year?

Hon Mr Phillips: I regret that we see once again a layoff in the province. Unfortunately, it is happening all too often.

In terms of the advice that I would recommend to the member for Elgin in dealing with this situation, I think the first thing to do is to recognize there is a financial need for these individuals. There is in our Employment Standards Act a requirement for termination notice and for severance pay. I believe this would meet the requirements of severance pay. They should be dealing with our employment standards people to ensure that happens.

The second thing is that in cases like this we set up what we call an industrial adjustment committee in conjunction with the federal government. That would be the second thing I would recommend to them, that they establish that committee, which can be helpful in terms of helping the individuals in counselling and in determining what training programs are available.

The third thing is that our ministry does have a program called Transitions, which is a training opportunity for workers who are 45 years of age and older, and some of these individuals may qualify for that.

The last thing I would say is that the Premier's Council is coming forward shortly with a thoughtful recommendation on additional things that we might consider.

Miss Roberts: What is the ministry doing to prevent future actions by American-owned companies located in Ontario from picking up and moving their jobs to the United States? How do we stop this? What procedures can we take?

Hon Mr Phillips: I guess the thrust that we are pursuing is what the Treasurer said earlier and that is to make Ontario an attractive place in which to invest. I was particularly attracted to the words in the budget yesterday, because I think it is kind of a guiding principle of the kinds of jobs that we want in this province.

The Treasurer said yesterday: "Ontario does not seek to compete through low wages, inadequate environmental standards or poor protection of the public interest. On the contrary, the government believes those who make the investment

decisions on a global basis are not looking for sweatshop conditions."

We are looking to develop quality jobs for this province. That is why the Premier established the Premier's Council. They recommended that we establish a fund and we have invested about \$1 billion of the Ontario taxpayers' money in helping to develop the kind of technology for those quality jobs.

The second thing I would say is that skills development is extremely important and the Premier's Council is additionally looking at that. I would say in conclusion—

The Speaker: I appreciate that. I try to treat all questions and responses as equally as I can.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Allen: I have a question for the Treasurer with respect to the fading shadow of the Social Assistance Review Committee's social assistance reforms. His government committed itself last year to a major overhaul of social assistance, yet already he has lapsed into tinkering with poverty.

He has already in this budget programmed himself for failure in the food bank strategy recommended by the standing committee on social development: only a five per cent increase in social assistance rates across the board, when inflation, plus the goods and services tax, will equal 8.1 per cent next year.

For the second year in a row he has ignored singles on welfare. He has ignored the disabled, who are in a desperate income strait. He has ignored the minimum wage; wage earners earn 22 per cent less in real dollars than they did in 1975. There is nothing for housing to make up for the food money problem.

1510

The Speaker: Do you have a question?

Mr Allen: Is the Treasurer prepared to tell the food bank volunteers and their supporters: "No, no, you keep on working away. We are not prepared to do anything here in the government. We are prepared to tax you"—

The Speaker: Thank you. Order.

Hon R. F. Nixon: I find the tenor of the question almost unacceptable. The indication is that members of this House and the members of this government are not as concerned with the problems experienced by low-income people as is the honourable member, in some sort of a mindless religious crusade which he embarks on from time to time.

The honourable member should surely be aware that, from a more impartial and perhaps better informed approach, the commitment to our Social Assistance Review Committee recommendations, which began last year, is expanded this year, and we expect to spend an additional \$403 million on these social programs. Whether the honourable member thinks that is significant or not is important to himself, but any objective assessment must see that this is an extremely large additional payment to assist those less fortunate than the honourable member and myself.

The Speaker: That completes the allotted time for oral questions and responses.

Mr Allen: On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: I just wanted to finish with that matter, and I will certainly listen to your point of order.

Mr Allen: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I find it unacceptable that the Treasurer impugns peoples' religious motives

and beliefs as an undergirding motivation for their actions in this House.

Mr Kerrio: No way.

Mr Allen: Well, what else did he say?

Mr Reville: He said those exact words.

Mr Allen: That is exactly what he said. My privileges have been abused. I ask him to withdraw the words.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon R. F. Nixon: If the honourable member will resume his seat, I would be glad to assist him in this matter.

Mr Allen: I ask him to withdraw those words.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Mr Speaker, I withdraw any allegation that the honourable member may be motivated by religious motives.

Mr Allen: Mr Speaker, that is not acceptable. I ask him to retract that second remark, which is just as offensive as the first.

The Speaker: Order. Are you finished?

Mr Allen: I hope he is finished.

The Speaker: Are you finished? There has been a request.

Hon R. F. Nixon: I would say to Mr Speaker and to the honourable member that I would withdraw any comment he finds offensive.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Allen: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mrs Marland: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I thought that the House and yourself would like to recognize the Citizens of Plympton Against Landfill who are in the gallery this afternoon. Elizabeth Tenhoeve, the deputy reeve —

The Speaker: I must remind the honourable member it is not a point of order. The member knows that she may do that under members' statements and she may like to recall that at some future time when she wants to make a member's statement. Thank you.

PETITION

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr Brandt: I am pleased to table a petition to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario signed by approximately 360 residents of the great community of Thunder Bay and area, which reads in part as follows: "This is a strong objection to the continuing rise in education costs. This can no longer be tolerated by the ratepayers." I have appropriately signed the petition.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUDGET DEBATE

(continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Mr Laughren: Before I begin my response to the 1990 budget, I did want to assure any viewers across the province who might be tuned in to this parliamentary channel that the

member for Welland-Thorold will return at a later date. He has not finished his discussion of the time allocation motion on Bill 68, the auto insurance bill. I know that there are a lot of people out there anxious to mail in their cancelled Liberal membership cards to Mr Kormos so that they can receive a copy of a very important and interesting book. I trust that viewers across the province—

The Speaker: I wonder if the member can tell me how that relates to the second order.

Mr Laughren: I thought that we had a long-standing tradition in this place, Mr Speaker, that budget debate was wide-ranging and encompassed virtually everything that went on in the province of Ontario. Certainly if you want me to deal with the auto insurance bill I could, but I thought that I would stick more specifically to the budget of the Treasurer as he presented it yesterday.

The Liberal members are trying to make light of the contribution of the member for Welland-Thorold in this regard, but I do think it is important that we all understand what he is doing and that he will be resuming the debate on time allocation on the auto insurance bill at the earliest opportunity. As soon as the government schedules that item of business, he will be here talking to the people of Ontario about the ridiculous auto insurance bill that this government has introduced.

This is the sixth budget that the member for Brant-Haldimand has brought down as Treasurer of Ontario, and while some members of the Liberal Party will clap their hands—I suppose there are people in this province who get joy out of misery; misery of other people, of course, not themselves—I want to tell members that if there is one thing this budget does, it is that it ignores the misery in our society. It pretends that there is none. That is exactly what this budget does. So to all Liberals who are applauding this budget, they should keep that in mind. That is exactly what this budget represents.

I am glad to see that the Liberals are still applauding the fact that this budget continues to have people in this province living in misery. It ensures that people will continue to be homeless in this province and that people will still continue to be hungry.

The Liberals are not applauding quite as much now, but nevertheless I am sure they understand just what the ramifications of this budget are.

This budget's big lacking, once again, is the element of fairness. There really is no element of fairness in this budget whatsoever. The Treasurer seems to not even have a comprehension about what a balanced tax policy is for a jurisdiction like Ontario. He has avoided ruffling any of the feathers in the business community by increasing the amount of corporate giveaways and by continuing to ignore the need for a minimum corporate tax. We know that is a very real possibility and yet he has ignored that again.

He has avoided the reality of poverty, hunger and homelessness in this province by giving no further consideration to the Social Assistance Review Committee proposals in the Transitions report which was brought down a year or so ago.

He has given no consideration to the housing crisis, as was mentioned by my colleague the member for Windsor-Riverside earlier this afternoon in question period. My colleague said that this is the most glaring inadequacy in the budget. I must agree with him. There was no mention of housing at all. I do not know how the Treasurer could do that. I do not know how the Minister of Housing could sit back and allow that to happen. If I were that Minister of Housing, I would be handing in my resig-

nation to the Premier. However, I will not hold my breath in that regard.

The Treasurer has avoided dealing at all with the adjustments that are inevitably going to be associated with the free trade agreement. Virtually all economists tell us there is going to be some kind of recession in the months to come, and the Treasurer is blindly ignoring that fact.

He has also largely avoided the environmental crisis in Ontario in what was prematurely called a green budget, and the Treasurer allowed people to talk that way. He sort of hinted, even, that he was a great friend of the environment. There were newspaper columns indicating that he was going to be a hero of the environmental movement. That certainly is not the case after they have seen this budget. It occurred to me that the only green in this budget was the mould on the old Liberal corporate ties. That is the only green in this entire budget.

1520

I would call this budget an avoidance budget more than anything else. The Treasurer has taken great care to avoid any kind of trouble with the influential in this province. He has been very, very careful. He has taken a total lack of care towards the very real difficulties being faced by the people who are having it tough, not just in Metropolitan Toronto but all across the province. So while the ripples on the surface appear very small, they tell a great deal about the undercurrent of this Liberal government.

I would like to spend a few moments talking about tax fairness. It is not a new issue with us. We have talked to the Treasurer every year about the need for introducing an element of fairness into our tax system. There is absolutely no legitimate excuse for the kind of tax system we have in Ontario. We have laid before the Treasurer, every year, very specific examples of what could be done to make the tax system fair. We have been very, very careful and, if I might say so, very responsible in making sure that for everything we said was going to cost money, there was a source of revenue to balance that cost without disrupting the province in any way. As a matter of fact, in most cases what we have recommended has already been done in one jurisdiction or another. We have been very, very careful to balance our spending proposals with our proposals for new revenue so that the Treasurer could not claim that we were just simply big spenders.

In the past five years, this government has increased the retail sales tax to eight per cent, forced up property taxes and introduced or boosted a whole host of consumption taxes. Because everyone pays the same rate regardless of income, these taxes consume a larger proportion of the income of low- and middle-income earners than that of the income of the wealthy in our society. Add to this the erosion of the tax credits, housing prices forced up through speculation and the fact that even people living below the poverty line must still pay income tax, and the result is an economy of hardship for the average Ontarian.

Earlier, in the question period, I asked the Treasurer three different times how he can justify extracting from a single person earning \$5 an hour, which is the minimum wage in this province, \$360 in provincial income tax every year. The Treasurer did not answer. The Treasurer responded with a bunch of bafflelegab but did not even attempt to justify or explain how he justifies someone earning \$5 an hour paying \$360 a year in provincial income tax. I do not know how he can live with himself—\$5 an hour and these people pay provincial income tax. I want to hear some Liberal stand in his place during

this budget debate over the next few days and explain to us how he justifies someone earning the minimum wage paying \$360 in provincial income tax to the Liberal government. I do not understand that at all.

On the other side of the scale, high-income families benefit from the capital gains exemption and the lack of both a wealth tax and a tax to control real estate speculation. While 297,000 Ontarians earning less than \$10,000 paid provincial income tax in 1987, not a cent of income tax was paid by over 1,100 individuals who earned over \$50,000. The impending economic slowdown promises to widen the gap between the rich and the poor in this province.

The Treasurer gave no consideration to lightening the impact of the federal GST on Ontarians. In fact, he confirmed that he is going to be piggybacking his sales tax on top of the GST. Our leader asked the Treasurer earlier today as well why he would not follow the lead of the British Columbia government, which is not going to apply the provincial sales tax there on top of the GST. It can be done. The Treasurer knows full well why he is doing it: It provides him with the windfall he wants without having to be blamed for it. I think that is not going to work. The people in Ontario will resent very much having to pay a tax on a tax, the way the Treasurer is setting about to do it. We think that is going to be about \$600 million a year in windfall to the provincial Treasury.

The Treasurer stands in his place one day and says it is \$170 million he is going to make, the next day he says it is going to cost him \$600 million if he does not do it and another day in his budget he says he is not going to make any money on the GST. I have no idea where the Treasurer is getting his numbers on how much money he is going to get from tax on the GST, absolutely no idea.

Mr D. S. Cooke: On the back of an envelope.

Mr Laughren: On the back of an envelope perhaps. It is really strange. The Treasurer, out of one side of his mouth, says that he is opposed to the GST, he does not like the GST, it is a bad tax. He is always sticking it to the Conservatives here in Ontario about their brethren in Ottawa imposing the GST. At the same time, out of the other side of his mouth he is very quick to say he wants to tax that GST and we get a windfall that he is playing games with in terms of the absolute numbers.

We know that as of 1 January 1991, everyone, rich and poor, will be paying tax on tax. In his budget, he tried to show that he might even lose money by doing that. That really, really was a bit much. Nobody is going to buy that argument—nobody—because you can bet your bottom dollar, if the Treasurer was not making money on the GST, he would not be imposing his tax on top of it. He would be doing exactly what British Columbia is doing. He is making big bucks on the GST. That is why he is putting the tax on top of the tax. There is no question about that at all, because politically that is not a popular thing to do. So why would he do it if he were not making big bucks as a result of doing it?

We suggested before the budget was brought down that he reduce the sales tax to seven per cent. Then he could stand in his place and say: "I have reduced the sales tax to seven per cent. That is about \$1 billion in revenue." But because he has this windfall of about half a billion—\$600 million on the full eight per cent of the seven per cent GST, but if it is seven per cent of the seven per cent GST, it is about half a billion dollars—it is not as though it is going to cost the Treasury a full billion dollars by reducing it one point. It would cost the

Treasury about half a billion. We know that could be made up simply by imposing a minimum corporate tax.

It is not as though we are saying that something outrageous should be done that is going to bankrupt the Treasury of Ontario. On the contrary, it is a most reasonable request. If the Treasurer were at all fair about this process, he could have done that and then he could have justified the tax on the tax, and I think people in Ontario perhaps would have accepted it. But the people of Ontario will not accept the tax on the tax. That is grossly unfair and we will not accept the games he is playing with the numbers. They simply are not factual. The people of Ontario are not so stupid as to believe that.

It does not seem to bother the Treasurer either that in 1987—this is the latest year for which we could obtain the numbers—there were over 40,000 corporations in Ontario that paid no taxes whatsoever, although their profits, their positive revenues, were over \$11 billion. They managed to write down those profits to the point where they had to pay no corporate taxes at all.

On top of that, we know that about 25 years ago, for every \$1 in corporate taxes collected in the province, \$2 was collected by the income tax system. Today it is three to one. For every \$1 that the corporations pay, individuals pay \$3, so we have had a shift from individuals paying twice as much as the corporate sector to individuals paying three times as much as the corporate sector. Of course, the Treasurer has not done anything to change that. As a matter of fact, he is reinforcing that trend.

Because Ontario administers its own corporate income tax, the Treasurer had the opportunity to ensure that corporations pay their own share. He still has. He can do that any time he wants. We have suggested that a minimum corporate tax at 50 per cent of the statutory rate—and for those people who do not know about those things, the statutory rate in the province now for ordinary businesses is 15.5 per cent, so a minimum corporate tax at 50 per cent of the statutory rate would be half of that.

Even the United States has a minimum corporate tax. The story goes that Ronald Reagan was told one day that a bank teller paid more tax than the bank that employed her. Even Ronald Reagan was incensed by that. He said there must be a minimum corporate tax.

1530

Here we have the Treasurer of Ontario being outflanked by Bill Vander Zalm and Ronald Reagan. That puts him in strange company. Perhaps it does not bother the Treasurer, but it is a strange position for a Liberal party and surely must give the Treasurer pause for thought.

We know that a minimum corporate tax by our estimates would raise about \$1 billion a year and would not cripple the private sector. They pay it in other places; they could pay it here. It is not a question of being antibusiness; it is a question of having a fairer tax system than we have now.

The Treasurer, however, instead of even doing that, increased the benefits to the corporate sector by doubling the Ontario current cost adjustment rate to 30 per cent. It was 50 per cent and now it is bumped up to 30 per cent. That of course means another \$140 million a year in benefits to the private sector.

Interjection.

Mr Laughren: I think the Treasurer would not have done it if he did not think there would be investment to warrant it.

Presumably he introduces these measures because he thinks there is going to be a return on them.

Interjection.

Mr Laughren: The Treasurer is somewhat defensive about this giveaway. I do not know why.

Hon R. F. Nixon: No, just trying to keep your facts straight.

Mr Laughren: There is nothing that is not factual about the \$140-million giveaway.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Let's say you weren't totally factual.

Mr Laughren: The Treasurer stood in his place this afternoon and talked about the \$140 million—no, I must correct that. He did not mention the term "new \$140 million." It was not in his statement at all. He simply said that—

Hon R. F. Nixon: There was \$250 million in the statement.

Mr Laughren: It was \$280 million. The Treasurer should be factual.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Well, \$280 million. We're both here to keep each other honest.

Mr Laughren: I really do not understand how the Treasurer can announce \$38 million for the income tax reduction plan at the same time and in the same budget as he announces the \$140 million I just talked about, and ignore the \$660-million preferential treatment of capital gains. That is money—

Hon R. F. Nixon: What about the \$900 million additional for low income people—

Mr Laughren: You can talk about all of them if you want. I am quite happy to talk about all of them. The \$140 million is brand-new money in this budget, as is the \$38 million. If you want to just compare what is in this budget rather than talk about all the programs and expenditures that are in place, that is fine by me.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Would the member for Nickel Belt address the Speaker, please?

Mr Laughren: That is \$38 million for the people at the bottom end of the income scale and \$140 million for the corporate sector through current cost adjustment.

Hon R. F. Nixon: It will be zero in this budgetary year.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Laughren: The Treasurer cannot have it both ways. He cannot stand up in his place and say that he is going to do great things for the corporate sector with \$140 million, and then sit in his chair and say it is not going to cost anything. He must make up his mind. I do wish that he would be—

Hon R. F. Nixon: Not this year.

Mr Laughren: I did not hear you say "not this year" in your statement.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. This is not a debate between two members. Standing orders state that you address the Speaker, all right?

Mr Laughren: As a matter of fact I would prefer to address you, Mr Speaker, if the truth be known.

Interjection: Through the Speaker to the Treasurer.

An hon member: Yes, through you to the Treasurer, of course.

Mr Laughren: I can understand why the Treasurer is so defensive. I do not know how he justifies the kind of tax system we have in this province. As a matter of fact, he put it right in his budget statement that a single parent with two children at an income level of \$18,700 will pay provincial income tax. He seems to be proud of that—\$18,700. That is because there are two children. If it is a single person earning \$5 an hour, the minimum wage, that person will pay \$360 in provincial income tax this year.

The Treasurer has a strange set of values when it comes to fairness in taxes. Even that \$18,700 he talks about with the single parent and two children is a figure that is about \$6,000 below the poverty level as established by Statistics Canada. I do not know, just in the interest of fairness, how the Treasurer can justify anyone living below the poverty level—that is not established by us, but by Statscan—paying any provincial income tax at all.

He is quoted in the press as saying—when we were pushing him for an increase in the minimum wage, and the press was, I gather, yesterday—“Well, people can’t live on the \$5 minimum wage anyway. They have to go to food banks.” The Treasurer seems to accept the fact that somebody at the minimum wage in Metropolitan Toronto earning \$5 an hour cannot live on that and has to go to food banks at the same time as he has taken \$360 out of their pocket in provincial income tax. How in the world does he justify that? How can he say that someone at his minimum wage, set by him at \$5 an hour, cannot live on that and has to go to food banks, and at the same time he is willing to extract \$360 from that person through his provincial income tax system. That really is a perverse tax policy. That really is.

We think there is no reason for anyone below the poverty level to pay provincial income tax. We have costed that out. We think the cost of that is about \$200 million. The Treasurer did not blush when he threw \$140 million at the private sector on the current cost adjustment increase yesterday, but he would not even think about the \$200 million to take everybody below the poverty level from his income tax rolls.

That is not an outrageous amount in the province of Ontario, \$200 million. As a matter of fact it is less than a third of the preferential treatment for wealthy capital gains people who would take advantage of the capital gains. By not taxing capital gains, by not picking up that portion, the Treasurer costs the province of Ontario \$660 million. That is big money.

The Treasurer gives those people \$660 million and gives the people at the bottom end of the scale \$38 million. That is what it comes down to. He could remove everybody below the poverty level from paying income tax for \$200 million—less than \$200 million. At the same time he has given \$660 million to Ontario’s wealthiest citizens. That surely is outrageous.

The tax regime in Ontario has not changed from the time the Tories were in power here in the province. I hate to say that.

We have told the Treasurer that there are other ways to do it. He could impose a wealth tax on the net wealth, with all the appropriate exemptions of course like family farm, private residence, cars, insurance, pensions. He could make the appropriate exemptions, but net wealth is very often actually a better measure of people’s wellbeing or material wealth than is income.

There are 24 countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. Twenty-two of them impose a wealth tax, either a tax on net wealth or an inheritance act, one or the other—22 out of 24. Only Australia and Canada do not

have a wealth tax; only those two. Even the United States has one. Yet the Treasurer does not see that this would be a reasonable reform of the tax system. It would not have to be onerous. As a matter of fact, it represents a very small percentage and we have laid before the Treasurer the numbers where he could easily raise about \$500 million a year without crippling anybody and still have in place all the exemptions that are appropriate, which I mentioned a few minutes ago; no problem at all. Yet this Treasurer simply will not do that.

Mr Pouliot: But why?

Mr Laughren: I think there was a book written a few years ago called *Louder Voices*.

Mr B. Rae: He’s been around the Hunt Club too often.

Mr Laughren: Yes, the Treasurer does listen to those louder voices who take advantage of the capital gains.

I want to move for a moment to talk about the municipalities. If there is one level of government that is most vulnerable, it is the bottom tier, the municipalities. The Treasurer screams like a stuck pig when the federal—it is just an expression, unfortunate perhaps; anyway, the Treasurer does not like it when the federal government cuts back grants to the provinces, but at the same time he does not mind at all passing on cutbacks to the municipalities. It does not seem to bother him at all. He does not see that there is a double standard there, to complain about what the federal government does to the province and then turn around and do the very same thing to the level of government underneath us, namely, the municipalities.

He has put a very heavy burden on the municipalities, and most members of this assembly will understand that, because we all get lobbied by the municipalities in our constituencies.

1540

I looked at the unconditional grants, for example. They have increased by only 4.8 per cent in the two years. They were frozen last year, members will recall. Taking into account the growth in population in the municipalities and inflation, unconditional grants have actually declined by 10 per cent over the last two years. That surely is inappropriate to the municipalities, because the municipalities have nowhere else to turn. The Treasurer can turn to the municipalities and pass costs on to them. The municipalities have nowhere else to turn. They simply have to raise property taxes, and of course they are regressive in turn.

Road grants, which cover the operating costs of maintaining municipal roads—I am not talking about building them—were frozen in 1988 and 1989. With this year’s grants the increase in road grants over two years is 10.9 per cent, but even the inflation levels were 11.5 per cent over that same period of time. So municipalities have lost both in the unconditional grants and in the road grants.

Then of course there have been other problems that he has transferred to the municipalities, such as courtroom security and the cost of pay equity. The municipalities have to pick up those tabs.

Mr Neumann: Why shouldn’t the municipalities pay equity?

Mr Laughren: Well, that is fine.

Mr Neumann: Well, why shouldn’t they?

Mr Laughren: I did not say they should not. I am just telling members that the Treasurer has passed on those costs to the municipalities without any compensating grants.

Mr Neumann: The municipalities should pay—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Neumann: Every employer in Ontario should have pay equity.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please, the member for Brantford.

Mr Laughren: The Liberal backbenchers are feeling a bit defensive about the budget. I am sure they are getting a lot of heat from their local municipalities.

In just the same way that the federal government can pass on costs to the province, the province can pass on costs to the municipalities. My only point is that the federal government can do it to the provinces and the provinces can do it to the municipalities, but when the Treasurer complains about the federal government, he has surely got a double standard when he then turns around and does the same thing to the municipalities. That is what I am saying. We know the municipalities are the most vulnerable level of government that there is. While costs continue to go up at the municipal level, the funding levels being provided by this government are not keeping pace.

Not only has the Treasurer continued to force up property taxes and not only has he held to a retail sales tax rate of eight per cent, but he has avoided facing up to the need that these unfair taxes have created by neglecting to restore the existing system of provincial property and sales tax credits. Mr Speaker, I know you will remember that those property and sales tax credits were created in 1974 by the previous government. They were created to provide relief to the lowest income earners from property taxes and sales taxes, which are regressive almost by definition because they are not related to your ability to pay.

They were created in 1974 by the previous government. When they were created they were to the tune of \$374 million. In 1989 the value of these credits was \$949 million, almost three times the value of the credits, but the combined retail sales and property tax revenues were \$3.5 billion in 1974 and \$18.4 billion in 1989.

The reason those numbers are important is that tax revenues through property and sales taxes have gone up three times as fast as the credits have. So this government is not even keeping up with that at all, and this year there is absolutely no increase in the property and sales tax credits; absolutely zero. How does the Treasurer justify that? That is to protect the lowest income earners in the province of Ontario, and there is no increase at all in the sales tax credits.

We called upon the Treasurer to make a major increase in the tax credits. That was one way. He could have said: "Look, I know that you're going to be paying more sales taxes through the GST, the goods and services tax. I know that we increased our sales tax from seven to eight per cent as well, and we are going to be charging tax on tax in January 1991. Here is a way of easing that burden somewhat for the lowest-income earners, by increasing the sales and property tax credits."

Did he do it? No, not at all; zero. He did not mind giving \$140 million to companies. He did not mind giving \$860 million to the wealthy people who take advantage of the capital gains exemption. He did not hesitate to do that at all, but is there anything for low income earners on the sales and property tax credits? Zero once again; it is truly remarkable.

Prior to his budget I know the Treasurer had meetings with a lot of groups of people who presented their case to him. In some cases we met with the same groups and we know what they told him. He ignored virtually all of those groups if they

had anything to do with fairness in the system. He also ignored a lot of the recommendations of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs. I know that the groups that appeared before him talked about the problems of poverty, the environment, housing, labour force training and adjustment programs. We know that. There is no evidence the Treasurer listened to any of those suggestions seriously. It makes you wonder about his consultative process.

There is no mention of funding for school meal programs, which of course should only be a stopgap measure because it is demeaning to children. It does not reach the elderly. It does not reach young children at home. Still, as long as low income families pay income tax and suffer with escalated housing costs, children must be fed.

There is no extra money to fund school nurses and other professionals such as social workers and psychiatrists. Poverty has great implications for children's health. For example, a bad diet can ruin children's teeth and cause hyperactivity and behavioural problems and so forth. As long as there is poverty, these needs must be met.

I do not believe—I am sure most members do not—that feeding the children of Ontario has to be justified or subjected to a cost-benefit analysis. However, I do know that when the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario made its presentation to the Treasurer in his pre-budget consultation, they pointed out, "All the studies indicate that for every dollar we spend on young children, we save up to \$7 later on in social welfare, prison, psychiatric treatment and all the rest of it."

There is no recognition by the Treasurer that he understands that, none at all. There is absolutely no awareness in this budget that the Treasurer understands the problems of children in poverty, absolutely no recognition whatsoever.

There is also nothing in this budget to address the feminization of poverty, because children in single-parent, mother-led families are more likely to be poor than children of two-parent or father-led families.

Poverty can also be addressed through other measures such as accessible, affordable day care. I must say I commend the government for expanding its child care expenditures by 27 per cent to compensate for the federal government's decision not to proceed with the national child care program. I hasten to add that child care services in this province have a long way to go. The Treasurer's unwillingness to fund child care at anything approaching adequate levels leaves many working families without child care and is forcing child care providers in centres across the province to cut subsidized spaces and lay off staff.

There is a need to provide better training opportunities for women. I really wonder just how much of the \$11 million in his budget that is going to in-school training of apprentices will affect the women of Ontario. I suspect not very much.

Also, as a general poverty fighting measure, the minimum wage should be raised. If this government was serious about fighting poverty, it would have announced an increase in the minimum wage this year to 65 per cent of the average industrial wage. I am pleased that my colleague the member for Hamilton East is here. He had a private member's bill in this assembly not too long ago that would have done just that. I am sure I have heard the Treasurer say that he knows nobody can live on \$5 an hour, particularly in Metropolitan Toronto but nowhere else either. It is an outrageous level for a minimum wage, absolutely outrageous. It says a great deal about the priorities of this government. The Treasurer always says it is the highest in Canada. Is that not wonderful? Here is the Treasurer saying that \$5 a hour is the highest level in Canada.

1550

Mr Mackenzie: And you should tax it.

Mr Laughren: Yes. I guess that is why the Treasurer taxes it. There must be some reason; maybe that is why. He is saying: "You guys, you've got the highest minimum wage in Canada. We're going to tax you." The Treasurer knows that, particularly in a place like Toronto, \$5 an hour is a sad joke. He acknowledges that, and he acknowledges that the people even have to go to food banks, for heaven's sake.

We think that in Ontario roughly 400,000 workers work for \$5 an hour, or \$10,400 per year. For a family of four, that is \$14,000 below the poverty line established by Statscan. We think that is ridiculous, and yet the Treasurer did not mention the minimum wage in this budget.

That is rather ominous. A year ago he mentioned the minimum wage and indicated in the budget that it was going to be raised as of 1 October 1989. This year, no mention in the budget at all of the minimum wage. Perhaps it will get raised on 1 October, but there is no commitment to do that on the part of the government. Why not? It is an obscene level for a minimum wage.

On social assistance spending, the Treasurer has increased social assistance spending by five per cent, effective 1 January 1991. That is an important date. Why did he announce it for January 1991? By setting it for that date, the Treasurer is ignoring the impact of the inflation rate of 1990, the year we are in now, or the effect next year of the goods and services tax. As a result, the poor are going to be left even further behind in 1991 than they are now.

Besides the erosion of this funding by inflation, a great deal of the funding will quickly be eaten up by the 6.2 per cent increase in the number of social assistance cases between January 1989 and January 1990. The Treasurer must know that the increasing case load is going to eat up a big chunk of that five per cent increase, so it is not even going to be really a five per cent increase. That, combined with the way inflation gnaws away at it, is going to make that a really paltry increase. So there is no reason to believe that we have seen the end of food banks in this province.

The other thing that makes me angry, quite frankly, is even the presence of food banks in our community. If I could use the expression, food banks have mushroomed since this government came to power in 1985. There are many, many times more food banks now than there were in 1985.

I do not know how a government, a Liberal government, can live with the presence of food banks in this community. I do not know how it accepts it. I do not know why there is not an uprising by Liberal backbenchers saying that food banks are an embarrassment to this jurisdiction, a complete embarrassment. I do not know how they can accept it. We might argue over the level of benefits; we might argue over the level of minimum wage; we might argue over the level of assistance to municipalities. How can we possibly argue over the presence of food banks in our community? How can they accept that? That is something that I have great difficulty comprehending. It truly is an embarrassment.

The Treasurer could have stood in his place yesterday and said, "We are hereby making a commitment to make food banks nothing but an embarrassing memory in the province of Ontario." That is what he should have done. He has the wherewithal to do it, he has the revenues to do it, but he did not do it. Therefore, I do not want to be unfair, but I can only assume that they do not bother the Treasurer or his government,

that the presence of food banks are an acceptable phenomenon in the province of Ontario. I do not know; perhaps some day the Treasurer will be able to explain all that.

I would like to turn for a moment to the problem of housing in the province of Ontario. I know that the Treasurer had meetings with the housing interest groups. I know that prior to the presentation of his budget, I assume, anyway, he was aware of the vigil that took place outside this building. It was an all-night vigil where the homeless camped out in tents, and people who are lobbying on their behalf did as well, because the last number I saw, there were about 10,000 homeless people just in this city.

Yet the government's failure to announce any new housing programs indicates a level of smugness that is difficult to comprehend. Maybe they think they have solved the housing problem in Ontario. The statistics, though, tell us something else.

There are over 200,000 households caught in the cycle of homelessness in this province. Over 41,000 households, representing at least 71,000 people, are on the waiting list for assisted housing. There is an apartment vacancy rate for Ontario of 0.8 per cent. That is eight vacant apartments for every 1,000, and they are not vacant for very long at any given point. That is 0.3 per cent in Metropolitan Toronto.

One third of Ontario's tenant households pay over 30 per cent of their income on rent, and this will likely increase as more tenants are hit with large rent increases because of this government's perverse rent review system.

From 1985 to 1989, average house prices increased in Ontario by 114 per cent, from \$86,000 to \$184,000, putting home ownership beyond the means of most families. For 1990, there will be less than 5,000 new non-profit and co-op housing allocations.

I noticed that this afternoon, when the Treasurer was responding to my colleague the member for Windsor-Riverside, he literally—I am not making this up—choked trying to get out the words "non-profit" and "co-op." He could not say the words. He had great difficulty saying those words. He cannot accept the fact that that is a legitimate form of housing in the province of Ontario.

The province has not announced a new housing supply program since the spring of 1988. The allocations of 30,000 units in the Homes Now program of 1988 are all used up. The Treasurer ignored the recommendations of the Legislature's standing committee on finance and economic affairs to introduce a follow-up program to Homes Now.

I am not sure why the Treasurer goes through the pretence of attending the standing committee on finance and economic affairs or why he pretends to put any stock at all in its reports, because he does not do anything that it recommends, and that is a committee dominated by his Liberal colleagues, of course.

There is still no introduction of a property speculation tax. For several years, the Liberal government has turned a blind eye to the speculation that was making housing prices soar. They insisted that the prices had peaked. The Treasurer was the one who always said that. We had hoped that by now the Treasurer would have learned that the time for prevention is before a crisis arises.

Hon R. F. Nixon: I was right, wasn't I?

Mr Laughren: The Treasurer says, "I was right, wasn't I?" No, the Treasurer was wrong, dead wrong. Does the Treasurer really think that prices will never go up again, that we will not see any more speculative increases in the price of homes and land? Nonsense. Absolute nonsense. The Treasurer says it all

the time, every year he says it, and then when prices level off for a while, he says, "Aha, now the heat is off; I don't have to do anything."

Surely to goodness the time to impose a speculation tax is when there is not speculation going on to prevent it from starting again. Once it starts again, it is too late.

The Treasurer will not do it, I assume. I do not know why. We do not see it as a revenue producer; we see it as a preventive measure. It is not a tax grab. An appropriate speculation tax would not bring in revenue to the province, it would simply prevent the kind of outrageous speculation that has gone on.

There is nothing in this budget for people who live in unsafe, insecure rooming houses. I remind the Treasurer of the tragic Rupert Hotel fire. There is an obvious need, and despite the recommendation once again of the Legislature's finance committee that special attention be given to the housing needs of singles currently living in rooming houses, the Ministry of Housing spending in 1991 is estimated to be \$666 million.

1600

That sounds like a lot of money. It is 1.5 per cent of total provincial expenditures. In the mid-1970s, housing got four per cent of the provincial budget. This Treasurer is allocating 1.5 per cent. In the middle of a housing crisis, the Treasurer's allocation of housing is less than half what it was back in the 1970s. So the Treasurer does not need to say, "I am doing a lot, I am putting a lot of money into it." As a percentage of the provincial budget, it is less than half of what it was back in the mid-1970s.

All of the housing groups who made presentations to us, and I am sure to the Treasurer as well, stressed the fact that we had to get up at least to the three per cent level if we are going to address at all seriously problems of the homeless and the underhoused in the province of Ontario.

I would like to turn for a moment to problems with working people all across the province. This Liberal budget does nothing for them if they are facing unemployment. As a matter of fact, it has already happened to a lot of people. Layoffs are rippling through the Ontario workforce. Auto workers are off the line for a few weeks at a time. Steelworkers are out of a job because of reduced demand. Construction cutbacks, particularly in residential housing so desperately needed in the province, are leaving working families without paycheques.

The downturn in the northern mining and forestry industries is the subject of high-level government memos. The Treasurer surely will recall the memo which stated that the northern economy was headed for some rough times in the months to come. There is no indication that the Treasurer is aware of that or is prepared to do anything about it.

What is in the 1990 Liberal budget for those facing unemployment? There is absolutely nothing except for the \$11 million for in-house apprenticeship training. There are no adjustment funds, no community development funds and no measures to deal with the human effects of unemployment, which even the budget predicts to rise in Ontario by 10 per cent over its present level.

The Liberals have not forgotten their friends in big business, however. The 1990 budget has given a \$140-million windfall to manufacturing corporations by increasing their write-off of new equipment expenditures. The uranium miner in Elliot Lake, the iron miner in Temagami or Kirkland Lake, the auto worker in Windsor or Oshawa or the steelworker in Hamilton or Sault Ste Marie surely do not get that kind of treatment.

By holding the balance of power in 1985-87, we forced the adoption of a number of labour initiatives, including the indexing to the cost of living of Workers' Compensation Board pensions, the legal right to know about toxic substances in the workplace, improved severance pay and notice of layoffs, pension reform, including portability, and the first-contract arbitration.

Since its September 1987 election, the Liberal government has shown its true colours. It has done nothing for working people. The 1990 budget confirms that the Liberals, like the Tories before them, are simply a government of big business.

Mr D. S. Cooke: I thought they reformed the Workers' Compensation Board.

Mr Laughren: Yes, they were supposed to reform the Workers' Compensation Board, and if you talk to most members, I suspect if the Treasurer even talked to his own colleagues, they would tell him that the Workers' Compensation Board has never been in a worse mess than it is today. It is in a complete shambles. Unless he addresses the problem at the compensation board, it is going to get worse. It is a mess. It is a complete mess, and the government has to do something about that.

Mr B. Rae: One of them has to go. Make up your mind who goes and sort it out.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Why not both?

Mr Laughren: The big danger, of course, is that replacing the people at the top of the compensation board with a couple of other people will simply give the impression that change has taken place when it may not be.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Isn't there another Lieutenant Governor's job coming open?

Mr Laughren: There is an option. I will not get into this, because it is not in the Treasurer's budget, but I want to say it is time—and I have heard this Treasurer even say himself that he believes that at some point we should have a universal sickness and accident system in this province. I have heard the Treasurer say that. We would all prefer that it was a federal plan, but let us not wait for the federal Tories to do anything that progressive.

Mr B. Rae: We can't do that.

Mr Laughren: No, we cannot do that. Perhaps the Treasurer is waiting for Bill Vander Zalm to move in that regard. I do not know what he is waiting for.

I want to tell members, our industrial system is too complex, diseases are too complex, for a compensation system like we have to cope with it. It simply cannot be done. No one knows what causes some diseases. So keeping that dinosaur of the Workers' Compensation Board simply is not appropriate.

Back to the budget.

Hon Mr Nixon: I heard him say no one knows what causes them.

Mr B. Rae: Some.

Mr Laughren: That is correct—some diseases. That is why the compensation board cannot handle it. They do not want to handle it. It is a mess. It is a complete mess, and the government really should be dealing with that.

I do not want to spend much time on it, but a couple of years ago the Premier announced the Premier's Council. I know that the Treasurer is a great fan of the Premier's Council. The Premier's Council has made some contribution to the debate out there, if we could get a debate on it. Perhaps that is something

we should debate in this assembly some day, the Premier's Council reports.

I think they have made some contribution in that they strike a responsive chord in me, in some ways, because they do call for a more interventionist role for government in the private sector in terms of establishing goals and so forth.

I am not sure, though, that the government is listening at all. I think they are totally ignored. I know that the Treasurer is responsible for the overall industrial policy of the province; I assume he accepts that responsibility. I think that there should be a more serious consideration of the recommendations of the Premier's Council report. It does call for some interesting kinds of intervention.

If the Treasurer were to look at how other countries have done it, whether it is Japan or whether it is West Germany or whether it is the United States, in each case there was a central role for government to play. Whether it was working with the banking system or the leading manufacturers or having a contract with the labour movement and industries, or in the case of the United States with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, there has been a central leading role by government.

In this province, that has not happened yet. It is very ad hoc. If government provides any kind of direction, it tends to be in response to a problem rather than as an initiative, and I think, as we are into the 1990s, with the free trade with the United States and with the more global trade, the provincial government is simply going to have to get off the sidelines and into the game. The government has shown no indication that it understands that; that it intends to do it. I know that part of the problem is that this Treasurer is very much an opponent of very much government intervention. Perhaps I should not use the word "intervention," that makes the Treasurer nervous—government leadership, to work with the private sector so that we are well placed in the 1990s.

I want to speak for a few moments on education. That is not unrelated to the importance that the Premier's Council puts on the years ahead as well.

This government has placed a lot of emphasis on the need for an educated, skilled workforce but has not followed through with the financial commitment necessary to restore Ontario's colleges and universities to the level they should be. It seems that the Treasurer has taken a step towards understanding the crisis in our post-secondary institutions with the \$18-million increase in funding for new equipment and library materials and so forth. He must have got some of the message that the Ontario Federation of Students and the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations presented to him regarding the inadequacy of the \$1.8-billion funding for universities that he announced last November.

I fear, however, that the mere 8.7 per cent increase in funding will be quickly eaten up by inflation, by the Ontario employer health tax, by pay equity adjustments and the cost of servicing enrolment growth.

Government underfunding means tuition hikes, and the eight per cent increase in tuition fees advocated by the government places an increasingly large financial barrier to access, negating much of the impact of measures to increase accessibility for women and minority groups to post-secondary education.

The extra \$18 million announced in this budget will not cover the costs associated with the physical upkeep and needed expansion of our colleges and universities, let alone relieve the financial stress of the impending faculty shortage. Without a

major commitment to faculty renewal in Ontario, student-faculty ratios will increase and institutions will be forced to place additional quotas on enrolments, thus forcing down both quality and access.

1610

At the primary and secondary level—this surprised me, as a matter of fact, in the budget yesterday—there was the extension of the \$300-million annual capital construction program. The Treasurer basically flat-lined that \$300 million. He has basically frozen that, as though there was not a real world out there where costs did not freeze in time. There was no consideration of the impact of inflation on these funds.

The announcement at the end of March of the general legislative grants for elementary and secondary education showed a continuing decline in the provincial share of funding. I recall that when the Liberals came to power in 1985, the provincial share of funding was 47.8 per cent. In 1990, the province is projecting a drop in its share to 40.8 per cent.

Mr D. S. Cooke: And what was their promise?

Mr Laughren: The promise of this government was that it would fund 60 per cent, back where it used to be. It used to be 60 per cent. When this government was campaigning for election, it said, "We think the province should pay 60 per cent of the cost of education." Ever since they got into power, it has gone totally down. It was over 47 per cent when they were elected and it is down to 40 per cent now. What kind of commitment is that to an election promise? So much for promises.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Talk about the feds passing on stuff to the province.

Mr Laughren: That is right. Here is another way of passing on costs to the hard-pressed property taxpayer, another regressive tax. I find it really hard to accept on something like education, which is primarily a provincial responsibility. Yet here they are passing the buck on to the local school boards and from them to the local property taxpayers.

The underfunding has contributed to cuts in some existing educational programs in various school boards and has also caused the education proportion of the regressive property tax bill to increase above the rate of inflation for the past few years. It is important to note that over half of the 8.7 per cent of the increase in GLGs will be used up on provincial initiatives such as smaller grade 1 and grade 2 classes.

I am not quarrelling with that. I support it. At the same time, those were provincial initiatives, not local school board initiatives. Together with an enrolment increase of 1.5 per cent, the school boards ended up with a real per-pupil funding increase of 2.5 per cent, half the rate of inflation. So the government is cutting back to the school boards as well as to the municipalities.

I come now to a part of the budget that I simply must deal with. It has to do with the north. As I like to think, I do not have a completely parochial view of the province of Ontario, but I am a northerner, and I must say I was taken aback by what was not in the budget for the north.

I could not help but think to myself: This Treasurer has, to give him advice, a Minister of Northern Development. He has, to give him advice, a bunch of Liberal MPPs from northern Ontario. What did those people say to the Treasurer? I know what he did in response: nothing, virtually nothing.

Does the Treasurer have no compassion for all those Liberal MPPs who are going to run around in the next election and say, "You need a member on the government side"? Do members

know what the response of the electorate in northern Ontario is going to be when they say that? They will say: "Why? We had one and he didn't do anything."

Mr D. W. Smith: What about those 1,600 jobs?

Mr Laughren: Ah, come on, listen to the Liberals over there. Absolutely nothing for northern Ontario. I am telling them, every Liberal member of northern Ontario is going to be in trouble in the next election. Mark my words. They will see what will happen to northern Liberal MPPs in the next election, because there is no reason to support a Liberal in northern Ontario, absolutely none.

Mr Neumann: You know that is not true.

Mr Laughren: I know it is absolutely true.

The budget contains no measures to deal with the thousands of working families in northern Ontario who face the hardship of unemployment as companies reduce their operations or close their mines and mills. The British and Canadian uranium barons, Rio Algom and Denison, are throwing over 2,000 workers into the streets of Elliot Lake. To help the Treasurer with that number, 2,000 people are going to be on the streets in Elliot Lake. That is 10 per cent of the population of Elliot Lake.

Can members imagine the uproar in Toronto if 200,000 people were thrown on to the streets by unemployment in Metropolitan Toronto? Can members imagine what would happen? The minister would not allow it to happen. He would move heaven and earth to do something about it. But when 10 per cent of the population of Elliot Lake gets thrown on the streets, he does nothing, absolutely nothing.

There was not a single announcement in this budget to deal with those problems in northern Ontario. The minister knows the problems are coming. He even had a memo from the deputy minister telling him about it. Nothing, no acknowledgement of that in this budget at all. Why? If I were a Liberal member from northern Ontario—maybe that is why there are none in here this afternoon. They are embarrassed by it.

If the Liberals were serious about long-term job development in the north, they would put—we have suggested a figure—\$600 million into the northern Ontario heritage fund over the next three years. They seem to have little regard for the north, however, because there is no new money for the fund in this year's southern Ontario budget.

Let me dwell on that heritage fund for a moment. The heritage fund was announced, with great fanfare: \$360 million over 12 years. Aha, quick arithmetic: \$30 million a year for 12 years. Mr Speaker, how do you think a northern Ontario resident feels when he looks at that \$30 million for the heritage fund for the north, and here is an announcement out of Toronto that there is a \$5-billion program for transportation for this area alone? How do you think the northern Ontario resident feels? That northern Ontario resident knows that he or she is helping to pay for that \$5 billion too. They know that; they are not stupid.

I want to tell you, Mr Speaker, that the government made a mistake by not funding the heritage fund properly. Do you know why they should have done it? It would have been politically smart as well as economically smart because with the heritage fund you have maximum flexibility with what you do with that money. You put it in there, and if there is a problem in Elliot Lake, you deal with it. If there is a problem with a road, you deal with it. If there is a problem with a company in a small community, you deal with that. Ultimate flexibility. It is really silly not to have done it. I do not know why they did not.

Maybe we are back to the louder voices again, and the Liberal MPPs in northern Ontario whispered to the Treasurer while everybody else yelled at him. He did not hear the whispers. I do not know what those Liberal MPPs were doing. I do not know what they are doing now. I suspect the reason that there are none in here is that they are back in their ridings trying to shore up support. They have got to be in trouble. The minister need not take my word for it; he can go and ask them. The next time he sees the member for Sudbury, he should ask him whether he feels comfortable.

Mr D. S. Cooke: He was in trouble before yesterday's budget.

Mr Laughren: The Treasurer just put the final nail in it. I do not understand why the minister would do that to his own colleagues from northern Ontario. I know the minister knows there are not many seats in the north. There are twice as many seats in Metropolitan Toronto as there are in all of northern Ontario. We understand that very well, but I think it is a cruel and unusual punishment the minister is imposing on his colleagues from northern Ontario.

Despite the millions that the government takes out of the north in measures specific to northern industries, like mining and forestry, it is sad to see so little going back in. Stumpage fees and other forestry revenues are estimated to be about \$100 million in 1989-90. The budget proposes new funding of only \$18 million for the Canada-Ontario forest resource development agreement. The budget estimates that the mining profit tax will provide \$197 million in revenue in the fiscal year 1989-90 alone, yet only \$10 million of new money a year for the next three years is being allocated for exploration.

If the Treasurer put those mining revenues, \$197 million for 1989-90—does he know how much Inco made last year in profit alone? They did not hit \$1 billion, but they were not too far from \$1 billion. The minister put \$30 million into the heritage fund, for heaven's sake, and he takes \$197 million out in the form of mining revenues.

The Treasurer is in trouble in the north. He may think that having a balanced budget covers all the ills that are contained in the budget. It will not. Good headlines the day of and the day after the budget, but when it sinks in out there what the Treasurer has not done and what a budget of avoidance this is, it will not sell as well as it is selling today. Mark my words.

1620

Mr South: Take you up on a bet on that, Floyd. I will take any of your money over there that that will win us more votes than anything we do.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Laughren: It is good to hear the Liberal backbenchers saying that—

Interjections.

Mr Laughren: Because the cameras are not on the member, I think our viewers should at least know that what the Liberal backbencher is saying is that having a balanced budget will get a lot more votes out there in Ontario than any kind of proposals that I am suggesting would get. That is exactly the point that we have been making. This is an election budget; simply a political pre-election budget. That is all it is.

Mr Fulton: This is not a political response?

Mr Laughren: Of course it is.

Mr Speaker, I digress a bit, but I want to tell you something. This is the Treasurer's sixth budget. Two of them have not had any tax increases, one prior to the election in 1987 and this one: only the two. Do I detect a pattern? Is a pattern already developing? Six budgets, and only two of them did not have massive tax increases: 1987, prior to the election, and this one.

I am not saying that the Treasurer is so cynical that he simply brings in a no-tax-increase budget prior to an election and then sticks it to them immediately after an election. I would not say that because there is no guarantee that he will be the Treasurer after the next election or that his government will be in power after the next election anyway. I am not suggesting that, but I think people in Ontario might detect a pattern here if there are increases only after elections and none immediately prior to an election.

I am going to get back to northern Ontario. I got off the topic by the Liberal backbenchers. Road construction improvement is a vital priority in the north where the long distances and sparse population force people to travel more than they travel in the south. The budget has no specific proposals for northerners. The budget also does nothing to reduce the higher costs of gasoline paid by northerners.

The budget did touch on transportation by talking about the rail transportation to the northeast. The government announced that it is going to open talks with the federal government to establish a night train service to the north. I found that very interesting because I had written a letter to the Minister of Northern Development suggesting that this government, the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission, should take over the small milk-run service.

I wrote to the minister. What did the minister write back to me? It is a very interesting letter. I had said to him, to be very specific, that the provincial government should look into having ONTC look after rail service that was being cut back by Via. The Minister of Northern Development wrote back to me and said, "I would suggest that you communicate your views on this subject to the Honourable Doug Lewis, federal Minister of Transport, who is in a position to address your concerns." Here is the interesting sentence: "Should Mr Lewis be receptive to your suggestion of a service agreement between Via and Ontario Northland, I am confident that the commission will be interested in discussing such an arrangement."

I thought that is what we were paying the Minister of Northern Development and the Minister of Transportation for here in the province. Here he is commissioning me to open discussions with the federal Minister of Transport on the provision of a rail service.

Mr D. R. Cooke: Did you do it?

Mr Laughren: I did indeed do it. I am glad the member asked if I did it.

I then wrote to the Honourable Doug Lewis. I better have the letter here after saying this. I cannot find it. That is terrible. I did write to the federal minister. Here it is, to the Honourable Doug Lewis:

"Enclosed you will find correspondence which concerns the provision of rail service in northern Ontario, more specifically between Sudbury and White River.

"As you will gather from the Honourable René Fontaine's letter of March 2, I have been commissioned to initiate negotiations between your ministry and its provincial counterpart in Ontario. These negotiations would concern the development of a co-operative service agreement between Ontario Northland

and Via Rail, an agreement which would guarantee an adequate level of rail service to the citizens of northern Ontario.

"Equipment breakdowns and infrequent service pose serious problems for the residents of northern Ontario who must of necessity rely on the rail as a lifeline. I believe that northern Ontario would be better served if Via Rail and Ontario Northland would combine their resources and work together.

"As Mr Fontaine states in his letter, he is confident that the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission would take interest in such an agreement.

"I ask that you give the proposal your most serious consideration."

I have not heard back from Mr Lewis, but I want to say that it is not often that a minister of this government abdicates his responsibility and passes it on to me. As a matter of fact, I would hope that the Treasurer would take a page out of the minister's book and give me the assignment of devising a tax strategy for the province of Ontario. If the Minister of Northern Development can give me the responsibility of negotiating with the federal government to provide rail service, what is wrong with the Treasurer saying to me: "All right, you think you know a lot about taxes. You are always hammering me on it. Why don't you devise a tax system?"

I tell you, Mr Speaker, I would put everything I have into such a task. I would work very hard to come up with a fair tax system in the province of Ontario. I would take it very, very seriously.

Mr Fulton: Floyd, why don't you tell us about the time you opened a highway?

Mr Laughren: The former Minister of Transportation is provoking me to tell a story which I will not tell.

I just wanted to make sure that the Treasurer understood how unhappy people in northern Ontario will be when it sinks in how little he has done for them with this budget.

I want to say that I am glad that there is a northern member here now from the Liberals, the member for Port Arthur. I am really pleased to see him here. I see the member for Port Arthur rise to his feet occasionally and ask questions. They are invariably good questions, and I think that he must be as unhappy with the answers he gets, as we are with the answers that we get from the ministers. So I think that the member for Port Arthur is going to be hard-pressed to sell this budget back home, as will all other Liberal MPPs.

Anyway, I did not want to spend too long on the problems of northern Ontario. I want to turn to the environment for a moment. We called on the Treasurer to use the means available to him to join in an effort to restore the balance in the natural environment. Green tax policies have proven successful in encouraging the production and consumption of environmentally friendly goods and services. When coupled with regulation and adequate employment support and adjustment programs, the evidence suggests that green taxes can be used effectively in the battle for environmental balance. Yet there is not a single green tax in this budget; in fact, it is as ungreen as a budget could possibly be.

There are no green taxes on packaging or on environmentally unfriendly products, no resolution to the garbage crisis. It is landfill, incineration and recycling all the way. That is what it is. No mention of sorely needed increased funds to the environmental contingency fund. No announcement of badly needed increased funding for the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement, known as MISA, or the clean air program.

We know that MISA is badly behind schedule and we know that the Ministry of the Environment is understaffed and generally speaking quite burned out. There is no mention of better funding for environmental assessment programs, despite the oft-stated concern that MOE is the bottleneck in the environmental assessment process.

1630

It is not hard to see that the 22 per cent increase in funding announced in this budget will not go far in addressing the true needs out there, and the environmental measures actually taken by the government are truly scary. Our leader raised the sewer and waste crown corporation matter with the Treasurer just the other day. The *Toronto Star*, not known to be too hard on the Liberals, called this proposal "the biggest setback for the environment that Ontario has seen in five years." That was 23 April.

Mr Neumann: That's because they didn't know what they were talking about.

Mr Laughren: Members of the government can say that the *Star* does not know what it is talking about whenever it criticizes them.

We are very nervous about the setup of this crown corporation. We do not see why a pro-development ministry like the Ministry of Municipal Affairs should have responsibility for this crown corporation. What guarantee do we have that the focus will not be shifted entirely away from sewer and water renewal and towards satisfying the innermost needs of Mr Muzzo and his friends?

I really do not know what it means when the Treasurer talks about this new facility working in co-operation with municipalities and the private sector. What is the role of the private sector going to be in this? It makes us very nervous indeed.

Mrs Grier: It will set priorities.

Mr Laughren: As my colleague the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore says, it will set priorities, in all likelihood.

On waste management this government demonstrates truly disgusting inconsistency by indicating that the funding will go largely to recycling and new incineration facilities. We thought the Minister of the Environment was dead set against incineration, and here he is putting money into it.

On the transfer of the Niagara Escarpment Commission, we agree that it should be transferred to MOE from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. We have been advocating it all along, but to do so without increasing or even at least doubling the budget of the escarpment commission means it is not going to be able to fulfil its mandate either.

On the whole question of the environment I believe very strongly that people in the province of Ontario will accept the imposition of green taxes if they truly believe that those taxes will be used for environmental protection and enhancement.

I must confess that I come late to the belief that some taxes can be designated. I have always felt as the Treasurer did: that taxes should go into the consolidated revenue fund and then the government establishes priorities for those funds. I do think, however, in this case, with environmental protection, given the seriousness of the problem and given the need to get the support of the public at large, we should start designating taxes that are raised to go directly for environmental enhancement and protection.

I know that is a break with the past. I know it would be traumatic for the Treasurer, but I really believe that the public

will support what are known as green taxes if they believe and have trust in a government that those taxes will truly go towards environmental enhancement and protection. But if it goes into the consolidated revenue fund, they do not believe the government. They do not believe any government, because of what they have seen in the past.

But environmental taxes are ones that can be designated. I believe as well that environmental taxes should not be a tax grab. I believe they can be revenue-neutral. But I do believe it is time the Treasurer look at a package that included some green taxes.

I would not be able to complete a response to the budget of Ontario without talking about health care. I am pleased to see that the government has finally seen fit to put some money into community-based home care. Unfortunately, they have limited this measure to the care of the elderly and disabled and not to health care in general.

While the province boasts of these long-term care initiatives and manages to find a few million dollars to boost inadequate wages for home care providers, it also has managed to find an additional \$250 million a year for new capital spending. Until the government takes a new approach to health care, making the province less dependent on institutional care, this imbalance and its drain on the budget will continue to grow unabated.

I feel obliged to comment on the lack of attention given to the health concerns of northerners, as was outlined in our report called *Operation Critical: The Report of the New Democrat Task Force on Northern Health Care Issues*. In dealing with the specific problems of a sparse population of about 800,000 in the north, spread over three quarters of Ontario's land mass, *Operation Critical* called for a decentralized northern medical school as a key way to address the problems of recruitment and retention of health care professionals in northern Ontario, increased travelling clinics, an improved transportation system and improvements to the northern health travel grant. The Liberal response was nothing.

In summarizing the over 250 presentations drawn from dozens of northern communities in our task force, we called for a doubling of the health budget for community and preventive programs to shift the emphasis in the health care system to prevention and to community delivery.

I wanted to speak very briefly about the northern medical school. The reason we want a medical school in the north is because we do not think the model used in southern Ontario is appropriate for northern Ontario. We want a medical school in the north based on a totally different model, one that would emphasize community-based care and preventive care, involve the francophone community and native people and train more paramedics, nurse practitioners and so forth. We feel very strongly that we need a new model. That way, we will be able to train people in the north and we will retain health care professionals in the north. The present system is not working.

We also think that if the government could design that new model for the north, some day we would see that it is even the appropriate model for the south. I think there is a beautiful opportunity to develop a different kind of medical school that would show the way for the rest of Ontario and provide much-needed improvements in the health care system in northern Ontario. I do not think it is an unreasonable request. I think it is most reasonable and the government should think seriously about it.

Once again, I do not know whether the Liberal MPPs from northern Ontario tried to talk the Treasurer into that or not. They sure have been quiet; I did not hear a word. I think the

Liberal MPPs from the north have to learn that they do not get anywhere by whispering into the Treasurer's ear. They have to hit him over the head with a two-by-four and then yell into his ear. That is the only way he listens. He does not know any other way. They have to do that. That has been the fundamental flaw in the approach of Liberal MPPs all across northern Ontario. They do not know how to talk to this Treasurer. He brushes them aside like fleas. He pays no attention.

Mr McGuigan: But the member says the Treasurer does not listen to him.

Mr Laughren: Oh, from time to time he listens to us. At least we could bring to the attention of the public the inadequacies of his policies. The Liberal MPPs cannot even do that. They cannot even draw to the attention of their communities in the north the inadequacies of his policies. They are not allowed to do that. They get kicked in the head if they do it.

We are saying it is time the Liberal MPPs understood that they are not getting anywhere with their present approach. I do not expect them to cross the floor so they can have a louder voice.

Mr D. W. Smith: The member can be sure it is more likely to be coming the other way.

Mr Laughren: No, I am not expecting that. I am not even suggesting it. As a matter of fact, we would have to look very carefully at anybody who even attempted to do such a thing. We are very fussy over here.

The total estimated 1989-90 budget for community and personal health is just over \$1 billion; less than eight per cent of the total health care spending of \$13.6 billion. This is for northern Ontario. This funding covers a wide gamut of services including community mental health, drug dependency programs, funding for local health agencies, speech and audiology programs, family planning, disease prevention and control, as well as home care assistance.

On 25 May 1989, the Ontario Legislature—Liberals, Tories and New Democrats—voted together to adopt a motion calling for these initiatives. By not including any of these measures in the 1990 budget, the government has chosen to ignore both the will of northerners and the will of this Legislature itself.

1640

Similarly, native health care is given no mention in this budget; none. After visiting first nations communities throughout northern Ontario and hearing many native presentations, in the New Democratic report, our report on native health care, *First Come, Last Served*, we called for self-government for first nations, aboriginal control of services and provincial resources to be controlled by native people to ensure minimum standards, the same as those found in all non-native Ontario communities. We asked for the provision of minimum standards such as running water, sewage treatment, garbage disposal, adequate housing, ambulance service, care for elders, midwifery service, education, preventive programs and programs to deal with family violence, mental health and substance abuse.

On 7 December 1989, the Ontario Legislature, again with the support of all three parties, adopted a motion by my colleague the member for Lake Nipigon that called for the same level of health care services for first nations as for other Ontarians, as well as an end to jurisdictional fights between the

federal and provincial governments and a process to giving first nations control over the delivery of health care services. They are sick and tired of being treated with ping-pong diplomacy, as the feds blame the province, the province blames the feds and in the meantime nothing happens. It truly is disgraceful.

In conclusion, I have tried to point out the most glaring holes in this budget. I am sure that an exhaustive exposition on the fiscal failures of this government would take longer than a debate on the motion of closure on Bill 68, the auto insurance bill.

This government has had very little feedback in the press and in general on the content of this budget, and I do want to set the record straight. This government has turned a blind eye to some of the realities in this province. It has turned a blind eye to the problem of poverty, of homelessness, of hunger—as an example, the food banks—of an unfair tax system, of inadequate education funding, unemployment, inadequate training programs, the poor state of health care across the province, endangered environment and 800,000 northerners whom the Liberals seem to be trying to forget.

Because of these inadequacies, I would move the following motion.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Laughren moves that the resolution moved by the Treasurer on Tuesday 24 April 1990, "That this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government," be amended by deleting the words following "that" and adding thereto the following:

"This House, recognizing that the 1990 budget fails the fundamental challenges of tax fairness and responding to the needs of the people in Ontario, condemns the government for:

"Refusing to take the opportunity to make real progress on tax fairness, including implementing a minimum corporate tax and a tax on wealth;

"Giving away more tax dollars to corporations, while exploiting the Conservative government's regressive GST and increasing the tax burden on consumers by charging the provincial sales tax on top of the GST;

"Ignoring the north, and continuing to use it as a source of general revenue while refusing to invest in community protection and economic diversification, including highways;

"Retreating from vital reforms in social assistance advocated by its own Social Assistance Review Committee, thereby condemning thousands of people, including children, to a life of poverty and want;

"Failing to even mention housing in the budget speech, thereby revealing its lack of commitment to affordable housing, including co-operative and other non-profit shelter;

"Caving in to developers yet again by taking responsibility for water and sewers away from the Environment ministry, and giving development priority over the environment;

"While acknowledging impending slowdowns in construction and increases in unemployment, failing to respond in any meaningful way to the shutdowns and layoffs that are occurring across the industrial base of Ontario;

"Therefore, this House declares its lack of confidence in this government."

On motion by Hon R. F. Nixon, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1646.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|--|
| Adams, Peter | Peterborough | L | Assistant to the Minister of the Environment |
| Allen, Richard | Hamilton West | NDP | |
| Ballinger, William G. | Durham-York | L | Assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Beer, Hon Charles | York North | L | Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. | Muskoka-Georgian Bay | L | Minister of Tourism and Recreation, minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Bossy, Maurice L. | Chatham-Kent | L | Assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Bradley, Hon James J. | St Catharines | L | Minister of the Environment |
| Brandt, Andrew S. | Sarnia | PC | Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party |
| Breaugh, Michael J. | Oshawa | NDP | First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Brown, Michael A. | Algoma-Manitoulin | L | |
| Bryden, Marion | Beaches-Woodbine | NDP | |
| Callahan, Robert V. | Brampton South | L | |
| Campbell, Sterling | Sudbury | L | |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor | Oriole | L | Minister of Health |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. | Oakville South | L | Assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Charlton, Brian A. | Hamilton Mountain | NDP | |
| Chiarelli, Robert | Ottawa West | L | |
| Cleary, John C. | Cornwall | L | Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Collins, Hon Shirley | Wentworth East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. | Renfrew North | L | Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities, Minister of Skills Development |
| Cooke, David R. | Kitchener | L | Assistant to the Minister of Citizenship |
| Cooke, David S. | Windsor-Riverside | NDP | House leader |
| Cordiano, Joseph | Lawrence | L | |
| Cousens, W. Donald | Markham | PC | |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. | London North | PC | |
| Cureatz, Sam L. | Durham East | PC | Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Curling, Alvin | Scarborough North | L | Assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Daigeler, Hans | Nepean | L | Assistant to the Minister of Revenue |
| Dietsch, Michael M. | St Catharines-Brock | L | Assistant to the Minister of Labour |
| Eakins, John F. | Victoria-Haliburton | L | |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. | Perth | L | Speaker |
| Elliot, R. Walter | Halton North | L | Assistant to the Minister of Housing |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. | Bruce | L | Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Financial Institutions |
| Epp, Herbert A. | Waterloo North | L | |
| Eves, Ernie L. | Parry Sound | PC | House leader |
| Farnan, Michael | Cambridge | NDP | |
| Faubert, Frank | Scarborough-Ellesmere | L | |
| Fawcett, Joan M. | Northumberland | L | Assistant to the Minister of Skills Development |
| Ferraro, Rick E. | Guelph | L | Assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|---|
| Fleet, David | High Park-Swansea | L | Assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Fontaine, Hon René | Cochrane North | L | Minister of Northern Development |
| Fulton, Ed | Scarborough East | L | Assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation |
| Furlong, Allan W. | Durham Centre | L | |
| Grandmaître, Bernard C. | Ottawa East | L | Assistant to the Minister of Health |
| Grier, Ruth A. | Etobicoke-Lakeshore | NDP | |
| Haggerty, Ray | Niagara South | L | Assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| Hampton, Howard | Rainy River | NDP | |
| Harris, Michael D. | Nipissing | PC | |
| Hart, Hon Christine E. | York East | L | Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Henderson, D. James | Etobicoke-Humber | L | Assistant to the minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Hošek, Chaviva | Oakwood | L | Assistant to the Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet |
| Jackson, Cameron | Burlington South | PC | |
| Johnson, Jack | Wellington | PC | |
| Johnston, Richard F. | Scarborough West | NDP | |
| Kanter, Ron | St Andrew-St Patrick | L | |
| Kerio, Vincent G. | Niagara Falls | L | |
| Keyes, Kenneth A. | Kingston and The Islands | L | Assistant to the Minister of Education |
| Kormos, Peter | Welland-Thorold | NDP | |
| Kozyra, Taras B. | Port Arthur | L | Assistant to the Minister of Northern Development |
| Kwinter, Hon Monte | Wilson Heights | L | Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Laughren, Floyd | Nickel Belt | NDP | |
| LeBourdais, Linda | Etobicoke West | L | |
| Leone, Laureano | Downsview | L | Assistant to the Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Lipsett, Ron | Grey | L | Assistant to the Minister of Energy |
| Lupusella, Tony | Dovercourt | L | Assistant to the Minister of Government Services |
| MacDonald, Keith | Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings | L | |
| Mackenzie, Bob | Hamilton East | NDP | |
| Mahoney, Steven W. | Mississauga West | L | |
| Mancini, Hon Remo | Essex South | L | Minister of Revenue |
| Marland, Margaret | Mississauga South | PC | |
| Martel, Shelley | Sudbury East | NDP | |
| Matrundola, Gino | Willowdale | L | |
| McCague, George R. | Simcoe West | PC | |
| McClelland, Carman | Brampton North | L | |
| McGuigan, James F. | Essex-Kent | L | Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| McLean, Allan K. | Simcoe East | PC | |
| McLeod, Hon Lyn | Fort William | L | Minister of Energy, Minister of Natural Resources |
| Miclash, Frank | Kenora | L | |
| Miller, Gordon I. | Norfolk | L | Assistant to the Minister of Transportation |
| Morin, Hon Gilles E. | Carleton East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Morin-Strom, Karl E. | Sault Ste Marie | NDP | |
| Neumann, David E. | Brantford | L | |
| Nicholas, Cindy | Scarborough Centre | L | Assistant to the Solicitor General |
| Nixon, J. Bradford | York Mills | L | |
| Nixon, Hon Robert F. | Brant-Haldimand | L | Deputy Premier, Treasurer of Ontario, Minister of Economics |
| Oddie Munro, Lily | Hamilton Centre | L | |
| Offer, Hon Steven, | Mississauga North | L | Solicitor General |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|---|
| O'Neil, Hon Hugh P. | Quinte | L | Minister of Mines |
| O'Neill, Yvonne | Ottawa-Rideau | L | |
| Owen, Bruce | Simcoe Centre | L | |
| Patten, Hon Richard | Ottawa Centre | L | Minister of Correctional Services |
| Pelissero, Harry E. | Lincoln | L | |
| Peterson, Hon David R. | London Centre | L | Premier, President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Philip, Ed | Etobicoke-Rexdale | NDP | |
| Phillips, Hon Gerry | Scarborough-Agincourt | L | Minister of Labour |
| Poirier, Jean | Prescott and Russell | L | Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Pollock, Jim | Hastings-Peterborough | PC | |
| Polsinelli, Claudio | Yorkview | L | Assistant to the Attorney General |
| Poole, Dianne | Eglinton | L | Assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Pope, Alan W. | Cochrane South | PC | |
| Pouliot, Gilles | Lake Nipigon | NDP | |
| Rae, Bob | York South | NDP | Leader of the Official Opposition |
| Ramsay, Hon David | Timiskaming | L | Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Ray, Michael C. | Windsor-Walkerville | L | |
| Reville, David | Riverdale | NDP | Chief whip |
| Reycraft, Douglas R. | Middlesex | L | Assistant to the Treasurer and Minister of Economics |
| Riddell, Jack | Huron | L | Assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources |
| Roberts, Marietta L. D. | Elgin | L | |
| Runciman, Robert W. | Leeds-Grenville | PC | |
| Ruprecht, Tony | Parkdale | L | Assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services |
| Scott, Hon Ian G. | St George-St David | L | Attorney General |
| Smith, David W. | Lambton | L | Assistant to the Minister of Correctional Services |
| Smith, E. Joan | London South | L | Chief government whip |
| Sola, John | Mississauga East | L | |
| Sorbara, Hon Gregory S. | York Centre | L | Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| South, Larry | Frontenac-Addington | L | Assistant to the Minister of Mines |
| Sterling, Norman W. | Carleton | PC | |
| Stoner, Norah | Durham West | L | Assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities |
| Sullivan, Barbara | Halton Centre | L | |
| Sweeney, Hon John | Kitchener-Wilmot | L | Minister of Housing and Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Tatham, Charlie | Oxford | L | |
| Velshi, Murad | Don Mills | L | |
| Villeneuve, Noble | Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry | PC | Chief whip |
| Ward, Hon Christopher C. | Wentworth North | L | Minister of Government Services, government House leader |
| Wildman, Bud | Algoma | NDP | |
| Wilson, Hon Mavis, | Dufferin-Peel | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Wiseman, Douglas J. | Lanark-Renfrew | PC | |
| Wong, Hon Robert C. | Fort York | L | Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for the Ontario Human Rights Commission, minister responsible for multiculturalism, minister responsible for race relations |
| Wrye, Hon William | Windsor-Sandwich | L | Minister of Transportation |
| Vacant | Ottawa South | | |

CONTENTS

Wednesday 25 April 1990

| | | |
|--|-----|--|
| Members' statements | | |
| Layoffs | 743 | |
| Mr Kormos | | |
| Anniversary of Chernobyl disaster | 743 | |
| Mr Jackson | | |
| Alcohol advertising | 743 | |
| Mr Velshi | | |
| Northern development | 743 | |
| Mr Morin-Strom | | |
| Tourism | 743 | |
| Mr McLean | | |
| Earth Day | 744 | |
| Mr Adams | | |
| Occupational health and safety | 744 | |
| Miss Martel | | |
| Environmental protection | 744 | |
| Mrs Marland | | |
| Hockey championship | 744 | |
| Mr D. R. Cooke | | |
| Statements by the ministry | | |
| Long-term care | 745 | |
| Mr Beer | | |
| Business investment incentives | 745 | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Appointment of Chief Judge | 746 | |
| Mr Scott | | |
| Responses | | |
| Appointment of Chief Judge | 746 | |
| Mr B. Rae | | |
| Business investment incentives | 746 | |
| Mr Laughren | | |
| Long-term care | 746 | |
| Mr Allen | | |
| Mr Reville | | |
| Appointment of Chief Judge | 747 | |
| Mr Pope | | |
| Business investment incentives | 747 | |
| Mr Pope | | |
| Long-term care | 747 | |
| Mrs Marland | | |
| Oral questions | | |
| Goods and services tax | 748 | |
| Mr B. Rae | | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Taxation | 749 | |
| Mr Laughren | | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Eastern Ontario | 749 | |
| Mr Runciman | | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Northern development | 750 | |
| Mr Eves | | |
| Mr Fontaine | | |
| Mr Hampton | | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Assistance to farmers | 751 | |
| Mr Villeneuve | | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Violence against women | 752 | |
| Mr Kanter | | |
| Mr Wilson | | |
| Affordable housing | 752 | |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Southwestern Ontario | 753 | |
| Mr Brandt | | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Northern health travel grants | 753 | |
| Mr Kozyra | | |
| Mrs Caplan | | |
| Long-term care | 754 | |
| Mr Reville | | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Asbestos in schools | 754 | |
| Mr Jackson | | |
| Mr Conway | | |
| Layoffs | 755 | |
| Miss Roberts | | |
| Mr Phillips | | |
| Social assistance | 756 | |
| Mr Allen | | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Petition | | |
| Education funding | 756 | |
| Mr Brandt | | |
| Budget debate | | |
| Resuming the adjourned debate | 756 | |
| Mr Laughren | 756 | |
| Adjourned | 767 | |
| Other business | | |
| Adjournment | 767 | |
| Alphabetical list of members | 768 | |

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Le mercredi 25 avril 1990

Déclaration ministérielle**Question orale**

Soins à long terme 745
M Beer

Développement du Nord de l'Ontario 750
M Fontaine



Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 26 April 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le jeudi 26 avril 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Languages in Hansard

Hansard reports all debates in English or French as spoken by the participants. It does not translate remarks made in either language. Headings and tables of contents reflect language use.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday April 26 1990

The House met at 1000.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

POWERS OF ATTORNEY AMENDMENT ACT, 1990

Mr Sterling moved second reading of Bill 131, An Act to amend the Powers of Attorney Act.

Mr Sterling: For those students here today and for those people who may be watching this debate on television, I want to indicate to them that this is a private member's bill. I hope this will be a private member's bill that will be a little bit different in that it may gain the government's support in calling it for third reading. For the past 12 years in which I have sat as a member of this Legislature, I have only seen approximately half a dozen private members' bills called for third reading and therefore go through the whole legislative process.

I hope members of the public who support the concept of this bill will take the time to write to the Attorney General and their MPP in support of this legislation if they agree with it. When I introduced this bill two or three weeks ago, I did not expect to get such a number of responses back from members of the public about their feelings on this legislation.

I want to quote a letter that was written to a colleague of mine, the Liberal member for Mississauga East. One paragraph succinctly puts the need for this legislation: "I have seen the need for such legislation in my own family, in my own career as a social worker in the community and as an active volunteer in the hospital setting. Medical technology has outpaced our body of laws."

It is my attempt today to start the debate in this province in relation to the efforts of many of our older citizens in particular who want to die with dignity. I have introduced in this Legislature Bill 131 and Bill 132, which I am going to talk about, although in the strictest sense we are only dealing with Bill 131. This entire issue centres around the mental capacity or the ability of a person to control his destiny once that mental capacity is lost as a result of an accident or illness.

I have approached the issue from two perspectives and I feel that both are complementary. One proposal is called the living will and the other a durable power of attorney.

Many members are probably aware of the significance of a power of attorney. A power of attorney allows me as an individual to appoint someone else to deal with the matters of my estate or to sign cheques on my behalf or to sign a deed on my behalf. In other words, through the power of a written document, I allow someone else to sign on my behalf if I cannot be there. It used to be that when I gave someone else this right, that power of attorney was lost if in fact I lost my mental capacity. Perhaps some have thought that, since I have indicated I may be seeking re-election again this next time around.

In 1983, when I was privileged to serve in the cabinet of the previous government as Provincial Secretary for Justice, I carried an amendment to the Powers of Attorney Act. At that time, I had considerable consultations with groups like the Alzheimer

society and recognized the difficulty for those afflicted with that disease. These individuals could give their power of attorney to a spouse or a friend but, when Alzheimer's disease took full effect and their mental capacity was lost, the power of attorney became null and void.

The amendment which I proposed at that time and which was carried by this Legislature as a government bill allowed Alzheimer sufferers to plan for their future while they were still mentally competent. They could then and they can now give their power of attorney to someone, knowing that their estate will be taken care of even after they lose the ability to make decisions themselves.

1010

The Powers of Attorney Amendment Act which I am now proposing deals with much the same issue, although it does not deal with assets but with the power to make decisions regarding medical care. I am proposing a durable power of attorney with respect to the consent and withdrawal of consent to medical treatment after we lose the power to make that decision ourselves. It is an idea that is borrowed from the United States where all 50 states have durable power of attorney legislation. More recently, two Canadian provinces have recognized the durable power of attorney, and both Quebec and Nova Scotia have designed their own durable power of attorney legislation.

The durable power of attorney will provide the authority to a given representative that continues even though the person who has given that power of attorney has lost mental capacity. It will allow someone to appoint someone to make medical decisions on his or her behalf. The appointed person can then be called upon by a health care provider to determine if treatment should be given, continued or discontinued.

The purpose of this bill is to allow an individual to personally select a representative who will speak on his or her behalf in medical consent matters before the need arises. In this way, the wishes of the patient cannot be ignored. I feel this will not only benefit the patient but also make it easier for hospital staff, who are often torn between doing what is humane and doing what is legal or what they perceive as being legal. Now they have someone to whom they can turn to make that final determination.

Take the example of an elderly woman who lives with a companion. Let us imagine that she has been estranged from her husband for a number of years but has not gone through the formal process of divorce. She discovers she is suffering from a terminal illness which will affect her mental capacity. She knows that soon she will not be able to make important decisions, including those regarding her future medical care.

She decides she wants her companion to speak on her behalf when she is no longer able to do so. She discusses this matter with her friend and requests that once her disease progresses and her mental capacity is lost, she does not want her dying to be unduly prolonged through artificial means. She now feels confident that her friend will use the best possible judgement when the situation arises.

Under our present law in Ontario, the friend who knows the patient and who knows the wishes of the patient would be ignored because the friend has no legal status and the hospital would feel obliged to ignore this advice and look to the family,

however remote they might be. Out of caution, the hospital may decide to continue treatment long after the patient would have wanted it and may continually resuscitate her.

I only need talk briefly about the current situation with regard to the disease of AIDS in Ontario. Unfortunately, in some cases, a family abandons the particular individual who is afflicted with that disease. In those very important cases, I think it would be most prudent for us to pass a piece of legislation like this so that we can give people afflicted with such an awful disease the comfort that at least someone else whom they trust will be able to make decisions on their behalf should they lose mental capacity and be dying.

Under a durable power of attorney, a friend can legally speak on behalf of the patient and make decisions based on the facts at that time. In this way, the wishes of the patient will not be ignored.

I quote the following statement from the New York Times Magazine:

"We plan for birth. We plan for college. We plan for taxes. We plan for retirement. But so dreaded are the thoughts of death that only a third of us leave a will when we die, let alone prepare advance instructions on medical care. Laws must keep abreast of social reality, and the reality is that if given a choice in a terminal situation, people generally would not wish to be nor would they expect to be indefinitely kept alive by artificial means."

This bill offers a way to address that situation. I hope that all members will support it.

Mr Polsinelli: Like the member for Carleton, I think I would, in responding to second reading of Bill 131, address the issues contained not only in Bill 131 but also in Bill 132, An Act respecting Natural Death.

As I understand it, the central principle of this bill is that anyone, when mentally capable of addressing the issue, should be allowed by law to choose and in writing designate another to act in the event of the maker's subsequent mental incapacity to consent to his or her medical treatment, to refuse consent to treatment or to authorize the withdrawal of medical treatment.

Bill 132 establishes a means whereby a competent person can express his or her intentions with respect to withholding and withdrawing procedures that merely sustain life in the event of a terminal condition and have those intentions respected. It is clear that in this day and age, when medical technology can keep comatose and terminally ill patients alive indefinitely, a means must be found whereby people can have their intentions known and respected.

It is interesting that in the law of Ontario today the only place where a right similar to this actually exists is in the Mental Health Act, where a person may appoint another to make decisions on psychiatric treatment if that person later becomes mentally incompetent. It does not exist in any other area of the law. I think, from my personal point of view, as the member for Carleton and many of the members of this Legislature do, that it should.

Earlier this year the Court of Appeal of Ontario confirmed the principle that competent adults are at liberty to refuse medical treatment even at the risk of death. I think it is important that we perhaps explore a little bit the fundamentals of that case.

That case involved a Jehovah's Witness who carried a card stating that, as a Jehovah's Witness, she did not want a transfusion of any blood or any blood-related products. The physician, irrespective of her wishes, administered the transfusion because the patient was close to death. The witness laid a

charge of assault against the doctor. The Court of Appeal held in that decision that the doctor had technically committed a battery in not abiding by the direction of the card—a very important point.

It also stated that the doctor cannot later be held to have violated either his legal duty or professional responsibility towards the patient or the patient's dependants when he honours the Jehovah's Witness card and respects the patient's right to control her own body in accordance with the dictates of her conscience—a very important point, a confirmation that a competent adult can refuse medical treatment even at the risk of death.

If I can refuse medical treatment for myself and I am confident, why should I not be able to designate and delegate that responsibility to another competent adult? I support the intention of this bill. This bill would establish an enduring power of attorney that would give people the means of expressing their intentions through their attorney and providing directions to their attorney.

As the honourable member for Carleton knows, this concept in a more elaborate and extended form is part of the recommendations of the Fram committee. The Fram committee is a government committee, the Advisory Committee on Substitute Decision-Making for Mentally Incapable Persons, whose report I am sure the member has; it was published in October 1988.

That committee was chaired by Stephen Fram, who is counsel with the Ministry of the Attorney General, and was composed of five government ministries and offices and nominees of many organizations with interests in this area of law. For example, involved in the committee were the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly, the Advocacy Resource Centre for the Handicapped, the Ontario Association for Community Living, the Ontario Advisory Council on Senior Citizens, the Alzheimer Society of Metropolitan Toronto, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association and the Ontario Branch of the Canadian Bar Association.

It is clear that this very issue on substitute decision-making and a living will is under constant advisement by the government. The government has taken an active role in looking at that issue and seeing what should be done. Quite frankly, along with the Ministry of Health, which has the responsibility of dealing with natural death, we are at the point where we can make a cabinet submission and have cabinet deal with the very important policy issues that have to be considered in this matter.

1020

While we feel that Bill 132, An Act respecting Natural Death, has been adequately addressed by the member, Bill 131, the one dealing with the durable power of attorney, does require some amendments and is technically weak in the way that it is structured. A number of things should have been put in the bill that would make it a little bit better. For example, in dealing with the durable power of attorney, should we not ensure that there are safeguards in the bill so that anyone who has been given this durable power of attorney is competent himself, do we want to ensure competency on the part of the person who is getting the power of attorney, do we want to ensure procedural safeguards in terms of the signing of the actual power of attorney, do we want witnesses—that kind of stuff? We may even want a centralized record, for example, of these durable powers of attorney. How do we ensure that in fact a durable power of attorney was given? We want any advocates to visit the individual prior to executing this document.

While we can support these two bills and their concepts—we think they are good ideas and I will personally be voting in favour of them—I think they do require a little further study and analysis in terms of the actual bills themselves, in terms of the procedural safeguards that are required in the bills. So while I will be supporting the bills, we look forward to the government introducing its own legislation in this regard, hopefully later on this year.

Mrs Grier: I am really pleased to have the opportunity to participate in a debate on the subject of the Powers of Attorney Amendment Act, as well as the companion legislation, or Bill 132, An Act respecting Natural Death, the living will, which would recognize the right of adult persons to make written declarations instructing physicians to either withhold or withdraw life-sustaining procedures in the event of a terminal condition. It is difficult to discuss Bill 131, the one that is particularly before us today, which would provide for a durable power of attorney, without also making reference to Bill 132.

I want to commend the member for Carleton for bringing forward this legislation and certainly indicate my support and my hope that the government will look very seriously at the pieces of legislation that the member for Carleton has introduced and move forward to put them into the law of this province.

The question of how and when we are going to die is something that we do not discuss very often in our society, but that does not mean that there is not a broad interest in it. As people get older, they think about it. They may not talk about it with their friends or their companions, but they certainly think about how the end of their life is going to occur and what that means, and in the vast majority of the cases they want to make preparation for that in a way that will not cause problems for their families. If I have found one thing with people as they get older, it is their very real concern that they not be a burden. They want to have things laid out, in the majority of cases, so that their families and friends will not be faced with making difficult decisions, so that the persons, as they grow older, have laid out very clearly their own wishes and what they want to see happen as they become older and as they become, in many cases, unable to look after themselves.

It is ironic that, with the advances of science and with the technology of health care, we have always been way ahead of changes in the legal and the social systems of our society. We have the technology to prolong life naturally, so that people are dying at a much later stage than they did even 20 or 30 years ago and we have the means of prolonging life artificially. As people approach their three score years and 10, or in many cases their four score or four score years and 10, I find that they fear death less than they fear the loss of independence and the indignity that goes with approaching of the end of their lives.

We have said so often in our policies and statements in this House and outside it how much we wish to support the independence of the elderly. We talk about providing home care systems, we talk about providing Meals on Wheels, we talk about providing the means by which people can remain in their own homes, but we do not provide the legal means to allow them to translate that independence into making their own decisions.

Often the support systems we have put in place mean that people do remain out of institutions longer than they might have in earlier decades. The consequence is that when they are institutionalized they often are much more seriously ill than they would have been in earlier decades. So not only do they have the dislocation of moving from their own place, their

familiar surroundings, their familiar neighbours who have perhaps helped them over the years, and the dislocation of going into an institution, they are faced with the inevitable indignities that go with being institutionalized as they get more ill and less able to look after themselves, the indignities of being cared for, of perhaps being fed, the loss of privacy that goes with being institutionalized and frequently having to share accommodation, which was not something that they had done up to that point in their life. They want very much to have control over the final decisions that are to be made about them, those decisions as to whether or not they require medical treatment.

The kind of society we have become also often means that when those people get to that stage they are not dealing with the old family doctor who has known them from childhood, or even from middle age. They may well be being cared for by people who are comparative strangers and who do not know the personality of their patient in the days before that person became ill and therefore may not recognize the stubborn streak of independence that an elderly gentleman is showing to be something that he has shown from childhood, not just something that is attributable to his final illness.

We have a medical profession that is, I think with justice, fearful of the legal repercussions of taking decisions with respect to a patient about which it may entirely sure. Often, sadly, we have a medical profession that does not listen carefully enough to its patients; it tends to know best and not hear what is in fact being said to it by its patients. Also because of the changes in our society, we have many people whose families are not there when they reach their latter years, especially if they are poor and have been isolated, have come here from a different country or have come to Toronto in the latter stages of their lives. So there is not a family or somebody who has known them intimately and who is able to support them as they try to exert independence in an institution and decide what they want to happen to them.

The legislation that has been suggested and that is before us today is perhaps not legislation that everyone would want to take advantage of, but it does provide a means for those who want to plan, who want to think ahead and select, while they are still competent, someone who will carry out their wishes. I think the legislation is long overdue and I think it has widespread support. I hope the government will not be fearful of the opposition that I know will arise from those who feel we ought not to be giving people the power to make their own decisions over life and death. I hope the government will recognize that the legislation being proposed today has been implemented in many other jurisdictions, in all 50 states in the United States. I believe we will find, when we discuss it more broadly, that there is a broad general support for it and that the government will not drag its feet, will not try to reinvent the wheel by coming up with legislation that it can claim to be its rather than something that was introduced by an opposition member, but will move forward and proceed through the process of bringing Bill 131 to law. As I say, I am very proud to support it.

1030

Mr Cousens: We are seeing an age in which people are thinking far more about sensitive issues that go beyond the present, this day in our lives as we have it, to make sure that we have established the context for whatever could happen. We have really had a closed mind to some subjects, but I think medical science and the changes that have taken place, the high publicity on specific incidents, have allowed people to become

more educated on what their rights are, what their needs are, what their wishes should be.

As we discuss these two bills before us today, the Powers of Attorney Amendment Act and the Natural Death Act, which is part of it, I think there has to be a great deal of sensitivity to what an individual wants and at what particular time he or she wants to have it. I have been very involved with the Kidney Foundation of Canada for a number of years, and it was largely through it, but other groups too, that we have on our licence form now the consent, under the Human Tissue Gift Act, where people can sign the back of their licence and certain decisions can be made following an untimely accident, or whatever happens to you, that your body parts can be passed on to someone else, again as a living gesture to someone else. Something very meaningful takes place in that, and that is something that has happened within the last number of years that makes a statement as to what you want to have done with yourself.

I think what the member for Carleton has brought forward in this bill brings forward another level of sensitivity to the way the law presently interprets what one would want to have done. I see this as a decision that I would strongly support as part of the whole movement wherein you have a power of attorney. As it stands now, as I understand it, not being a lawyer, you do not have that ability to act on medical needs for a person when you have the power of attorney unless you are a close family relative. So a friend who is close to a person who is in need could then be given this power so he could act on his or her behalf when the need arises.

One of the sensitive areas has to be with those victims of AIDS who are estranged from their families. They do not have a person of their own family who will become involved in their illness or their death or in what is happening with them in the same intimate way as a close family member might and would. In an instance such as that, this act would allow a friend who understood this person, who cared enough for him, to help him in making the right decisions as they pertain to his health.

We are seeing new drugs, we are seeing new respirators, we are seeing efforts in medical science to keep people alive who would have died. I guess one of the classic cases in the mid-1970s was that of Karen Ann Quinlan. After the parents won the case before the courts to have the respirator disconnected, she continued to live in a coma for some nine years. I guess to me the fight and battle they had with regard to the disconnection of the medical services, only to the extent of the respirator, was a battle where one really wonders whether that should be allowed to happen.

I am saying there is a benefit now for someone who does not have family and who does not have that intimate contact, someone who trusts you and someone whom you trust. If you are a Jehovah's Witness, it means you will have someone else who can respect your own wishes as a Jehovah's Witness regarding a transfusion or some other act. If it has to do with someone of a deep religious belief that goes beyond what the Jehovah's Witness would ask for, then you have someone. If it is outside the family and you are no longer part of that family, someone else can fight on your behalf.

When the member for Carleton brought in these two companion pieces of legislation, he did bring in the whole suggestion of the living will. When you look at that, a living will really is a statement that a person makes, in writing, that if a terminal or irreversible condition occurs and that individual cannot communicate, then treatment should be discontinued. Its essence is that life-sustaining procedures should not be used to artificially prolong life. It does not specifically name a repre-

sentative, but it does give general directions for medical care in these situations. The living will would allow health care providers to obey the wishes of the individual without any liability for their actions. It also imposes penalties for those who refuse to comply with such a request.

As we look to the future, I have to say that there is a tremendous need for all our society to look at our legal needs, at what our own will is, at the action we want to have taken with regard to power of attorney. Should these two bills pass in the Legislature—and I sense a strong consensus, among those who have spoken anyway—legislation could be brought forward, which would have strong support from the members of this House, that allows for that individual decision to be made with the best interests of each one of us at heart as to what medical attention would be continued to be given and also what would be the nature of the services provided should it be a very terminal illness and certain action needs to be taken that you would want to have taken.

I do not think society should legislate this for all people. I think the strength of what the member for Carleton has brought forward is it allows each of us to legislate what we want to have done for ourselves. That is a democracy at work. It allows freedom within society where there is a framework where that freedom shows great respect for each human being.

I think that we have to have more respect for all of us. Last night, when Toronto went into darkness, we saw that. People who came from other parts of Canada and the United States were so surprised that it was such a peaceful city even in the darkness. Let it be peaceful in the hearts and minds of all people when they make up their mind as to what they want to have done for themselves with regard to their life and their death and before their death, dealing with it intelligently, dealing with it not only as if it is just for seniors and elderly. Karen Ann Quinlan was a young lady who died at 31. What about our young people and people of all ages? Maybe it is something we should think of when we get married. Maybe it is something we should think of before we go to university. At some point, we should be at least stopping to consider what it is we want to have done with regard to ourselves.

[Interruption]

The Acting Speaker (Mr Cureatz): I would like to mention to those guests in attendance that, unfortunately, you are not allowed to participate in the debate.

Mr Daigeler: I welcome this opportunity to make a few comments on a subject of grave importance for people during the last stages of their lives on this earth. The issue is not a new one, but the member for Carleton is right in drawing all our attention once again to a serious issue of private and public morality.

At the outset, let me say that I agree with the basic premise and intentions of the member as mentioned in his speech today and in the material which he has shared with us beforehand. It is indeed a basic principle of medical ethics that individuals have the final say over the treatment by others of their physical or mental condition.

With the ever-increasing development of medical technology, this basic right has become blurred. Situations often occur where individual organ functions can be maintained with little or no prospect of a reasonable restoration of people's health. Often enough, by then they have become unconscious or incapable of making informed decisions about their own treatment. In situations such as these, the initiatives proposed by the member are already followed in many health care settings. The

attending medical personnel and the relatives and friends who care about the dignity of the dying person can find comfort in knowing the previously expressed basic mindset of the patient.

Personally, I have often felt that some highly complex medical techniques to prolong life by a few months or even years are a sign of vitalistic idolatry rather than true improvements to our quality of living. Life in this world is not eternal, nor should it be our highest objective. To pretend otherwise takes away our serene peace of mind in adverse conditions and introduces a hopeless frenzy of avoiding death at all costs.

1040

While I have no problems, from my non-legal perspective, with the durable power of attorney amendment before us, I do have some reservations about the proposed legalization of the so-called living will. The member himself said in his press conference speech that the term "living will" is a misnomer. As with the title of the member's act, it would be much better, therefore, to speak of a natural death will. We are dealing with highly artificial efforts to prolong the process of dying rather than efforts to extend life. It would be more appropriate and precise, therefore, to speak about "death-prolonging" rather than "life-sustaining" whenever this term is used in the current text of the bill.

Moreover, I find it unnecessary and in fact quite ambiguous to say that the withdrawal of death-prolonging procedures "shall be deemed not to be suicide," as the bill presently does in section 7. Precision of language is exceedingly important, lest we break the radical distinction between artificial prolongation of death and the deliberate shortening of one's life.

I am also somewhat concerned about introducing too many formal, legal provisions in times when we need, above all, care, love and good, responsible judgement. I hope the member does not want to introduce in this country the American trend towards litigation and legalization of most aspects of life. Doctors, nurses, family members and friends should rely foremost on their good, responsible and informed judgement at the time of death. Moreover, with the increasing emphasis on the need for natural death wills, it may become standard practice to treat patients as long as technically possible unless they have signed such papers. I know the member does not want to see this happen, but it may be an unintended consequence of codifying initiatives that may be quite useful as a matter of practical convenience.

Our awkward parliamentary decision-making process allows for only yes or no votes during private members' hour. This black and white approach fails, in my opinion, to do justice to meaningful amendments that might make our legislative projects more acceptable to everyone. However, I know that the final okay for today's bill or bills must come from cabinet, and I am confident they will take my comments and those of my colleagues into careful consideration. I will therefore support this bill today and recommend it to the government for further refinement.

Mr Reville: I will be supporting Bill 131, standing in the name of the member for Carleton, but I notice that the debate continues to get broader and includes Bill 132, An Act respecting Natural Death, which I would also be glad to support if it were indeed before the House at this time, which it is not. In fact, it would be interesting, seeing that they are indeed companion bills, if we could have a process whereby both the bills could be dealt with at the same time. There is a way to do that, I should think. It seems to me that although I would support Bill

131 receiving third reading without delay, it is unlikely that the process will occur.

Accordingly, I will support any motion made by the member for Carleton that this matter be sent to a committee. At committee we could discuss matters more properly discussed under Bill 132 as well, because these are issues that are increasingly important to us as medical technology has advanced to the stage where people may be kept alive, in a manner of speaking, almost indefinitely, although the quality of the life is very much in question.

The member for Nepean describes the private members' hour as being a very black and white process. I do not agree at all. Whenever this chamber is considering legislation, on second reading we consider the principles of the legislation. Oft-times one votes yea because one supports the principles of the legislation but makes comment about amendments that one would like to see to the legislation in the committee of the whole House stage or in the standing committee stage. It is quite common, in fact, to support legislation on second reading in hopes of obtaining appropriate amendments and having the broad public discussion that I know we all like to see.

I have a personal connection with the Dying with Dignity people, because when I was an alderman at Metropolitan Toronto council, I was asked to chair one of their forums where the issues were debated from many sides. We had a fascinating full debate with different points of view being advanced, and with people from other jurisdictions, notably the Hemlock Society, in attendance to describe the way they approach these issues.

For me, Bill 131 is an empowering piece of legislation because it enables individuals to provide someone who they trust with directions regarding what will happen to them if they are unable to give those directions themselves. I think that has to be one of the most essential rights that an individual can have and I regret any diminution of those rights, wherever those rights may be decreased by medical practice or by our law.

The initiative of the member for Carleton is to be applauded, and I urge other members of the Legislature to vote in favour of Bill 131 at second reading, to support requests for hearings if they are made and to be prepared to come to the hearings and discuss both the Powers of Attorney Amendment Act and An Act respecting Natural Death, because I think they belong together.

Mr J. M. Johnson: I am very pleased to have the opportunity to support this legislation, Bill 131, and also to express my support for Bill 132, a companion piece of legislation commonly known as the living will.

I might also mention that in the gallery today are two constituents from Mount Forest, Mr and Mrs Earl Hunt. Mrs Hunt was very instrumental in promoting the concept of the living will in the county of Wellington and has been very supportive of the initiatives of the member for Carleton.

I congratulate my good friend and colleague the member for Carleton for bringing forth this legislation, because it is something that in my opinion is needed, especially for the benefit of our seniors. It is not legislation that is mandatory in any sense of the meaning, but it is permissive and it allows individuals to make their own decisions on something that is fundamentally their decision to make.

I would feel that if individuals, while they still have their full faculties, their mental abilities, decide that they wish certain things to happen, that they have enough confidence in an individual to entrust him with this very serious power of attorney, they should have that right to do so.

There are decisions that can be made at the time while the individual is in his full mental state that cannot be addressed at the time of an imminent death. Certainly, if the individual did not have this type of power of attorney provision, then the family and the doctors would be placed in the onerous position of having to make the decision. This would allow the person who felt that he was close to reaching the end to make some final decisions at the time as he so wished.

This, to me, makes a lot of sense. The living will goes further and has a lot of aspects to it that are certainly worth consideration. I hope that the government will at least give enough permission to the member to allow the bill, if not to go to committee, to certainly bring in a companion or similar piece of legislation so that the Legislature does have the opportunity to debate it and to put forward reasons for such legislation.

1050

Miss Roberts: There are approximately two minutes left of our time. I would like to ask unanimous consent of the House to allow the presenter of this bill to have that two minutes.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Elgin has asked for unanimous consent to allow the remaining two minutes for the government party to be attached to the honourable member who has presented the legislation.

Agreed to.

Mr Sterling: I am just waiting to see how much time I have, to calculate where I am going to start and where I am going to end on this matter.

During this debate, members have referred to both Bill 131 and Bill 132 and have addressed the concepts of both the durable power of attorney and the living will. Therefore, I would ask unanimous consent of this Legislature that I be permitted to move also second reading of Bill 132 at the same time. Then, when we come to vote, we will be able to vote on both Bill 131 and Bill 132.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member has brought forward a proposal for consent for allowing consideration of voting on Bill 132. Member for Carleton, are you going to be further discussing the bill in front of us?

Mr Sterling: Yes.

The Acting Speaker: You will. The honourable member has requested consent for the consideration of voting at noon with the companion legislation. Do we have consent?

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: We do not have consent.

Mr Sterling: I would like to point out to the people from the Dying with Dignity group that the Liberal members of the House were not willing to call second reading of Bill 132.

I also want to indicate to the members who are working so hard with regard to this whole issue that today we are going to see the Liberal members vote in favour of Bill 131. But in essence what they are saying to all members is, "We are not going to permit Mr Sterling and this piece of legislation"—

The Acting Speaker: On a point of order to the honourable member: You should address the chair.

Mr Sterling: Mr Speaker, I want to indicate to them that the reason so many people in Canada and Ontario are cynical towards the whole process of politics is that we find within this process a situation where members will stand up and say they

support a particular principle but they are saying, for very specious reasons, "We want the government to get credit for this legislative manoeuvre and you're going to have to wait a bloody long time before you're going to have this legislation in front of the House again."

Mr Fleet: This is really a cheap point. You want to mislead the people sitting in the audience. This is really misleading.

Mr Sterling: It is true. The parliamentary assistant for the Attorney General was the leadoff speaker—

Mr Fleet: It's not the whole truth. Why don't you tell the whole truth? You're the one who wants to change the rules.

The Acting Speaker: Order, honourable member for High Park-Swansea. As you well know, under our standing orders interjections are allowed from time to time, I say to the honourable minister, but a continuing, rambling dialogue is not permitted.

Mr Sterling: The member for High Park-Swansea has been here for a short period of time and maybe, if we are graced in the next election, we will have people who will think more forwardly in terms of dealing with legislation.

I say to the people of the province and the people who are particularly concerned about this issue, Mrs Hunt, who was introduced by my friend, represents the Women's Institute of Ontario, 24,000 strong in 1,000 different branches. She has led the fight for the women's institute to have legislation like this passed. She wrote to the Attorney General four months ago and has not had the courtesy of a response from the Attorney General on this matter.

What kind of hope do we in the Legislature of Ontario, or the people of Ontario, have for legislation like this to come to the fore, to be introduced by the government and to be carried by the government? The fact of the matter is, I offered this legislation. The Attorney General sat across from me when this legislation was introduced three weeks ago. He applauded the introduction of the legislation. I said to him that very day: "If you have objections to this legislation, call me. I'll change the legislation even before we have second reading." The fact of the matter is, I have never had the courtesy of a call back from him on the piece of legislation.

I invite the members of the government side to vote against this legislation if they truly do not want the legislation seriously discussed and passed by this Legislature into third and final reading form. I am going to ask this Legislature that the bill, if it receives the vote of the majority of the members in here, be sent out to a committee so that we will have the opportunity to hear different groups talk about this piece of legislation.

If 20 members on that side rise and block that move, I want the members of the public to understand where the Liberals are on this legislation. They are jealous of the fact that somebody has been progressive enough to bring this legislation to the fore. I did not want to give this speech, but it is necessary to talk with regard to this process. Those of my friends who have been here for 12 years with me in this Legislature are getting sick and tired of the fact that a member—

Mr McGuigan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The speaker is imputing motives on very sensitive matters, matters of living and dying, and people on this side agree with him on. But he is turning it into a political—well, I am not going to use the words that really apply. Graveside politics.

The Acting Speaker: We will not discuss whether it indeed is a point of order, but the point has been made.

Mr Sterling: I did not want to make the speech that I have just made, but I am cynical of the attitude of this government. I want this legislation to pass, and the only way we can get anything done with these guys is to cajole them into something.

The Acting Speaker: We have had the concluding remarks of the honourable member for Carleton on Bill 131, An Act to amend the Powers of Attorney Act. Time having expired on this legislation, we will now look forward to the vote at noon.

1100

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Mr Carrothers moved resolution 49:

That in the opinion of this House, since the problems facing society and government are becoming increasingly more complex; and that the most valuable resource that the Ontario government or any other government has are the people working within it; and that the principles behind the organization and structure of the Ontario government have not been examined for some time, the Ontario government should review its structure and its operating and human resource practices with a view to simplifying and restructuring its operations so as to meet the demonstrated needs of its citizenry in a creative, flexible and responsive manner.

Mr Carrothers: In the few minutes available to me, I want to speak a bit, not about policymaking or how we make policy in government or really about how we exercise financial controls, but about what takes place after we have done that, with the delivery of those policies, with the delivery of the services that we decide we need and we decide we are going to fund to the public, what you might call the business side of what we do in government. I feel that the organization of our civil service is too rigid to allow flexible and effective delivery of services and is too rigid to allow those in the civil service who are performing these tasks to do the best job they are capable of.

In the few minutes that I have, I want to comment on how we got where we are in terms of the principles of organization of our civil service, make some comments on what this means in practice, give some examples of what we might do to change matters and, if time remains, talk about what is going on in some other jurisdictions in the world.

In order to understand the principles that underlie our civil service, we need to look back to the last century—to 1854, in fact—to a report which was given to the United Kingdom government called the Trevelyan-Northcote Report. That report set out the principles on which the United Kingdom civil service was to be organized and the principles which we incorporated into our civil service when we organized it in 1918.

The principles outlined in that report were to have a permanent civil service and a professional civil service, one that was oriented towards policy and one that was oriented towards analysis and problem-solving. That was very appropriate to the day. Government in those days really set the context in which things operated. It was not actively involved in what goes on. But as we have seen since the Depression and the Second World War, governments have become much more active, much more involved in our daily life and in fact carry out tasks, perform functions and carry out business activities.

I think what has happened is that this new, very active role has been grafted on to the old policy-oriented role, but that old organization, those basic principles, have stayed rooted in policy.

When we modernized our civil service here in Ontario in the late 1960s and early 1970s, we focused again on our policymaking activities, how we are going to co-ordinate policy, and our financial activities. The feeling at the time seemed to be that if we had the plan straight and got the money in order, perhaps everything else would somehow work out.

I am not sure that is enough. I think we need to look at the actual traditions and principles that operate within our civil service, the culture, if you will, within which that civil service operates.

A policy-related organization is one that focuses very much on control and on rigidity, and it speaks of procedures and of structures, all of which is very appropriate when you are coming up with policy, particularly in government.

As we all know, government is not business. It does not operate within a marketplace. It cannot very easily test by going into the market whether its ideas work or do not. So you have to be very careful when developing policy. You need checks. You need counterbalances. You need quite an elaborate structure to make sure that the policy which you are bringing forward is actually appropriate and is going to work, because the results or the impact that you are having with that policy may not be immediately evident. You may not be able to change quickly enough.

But I am not sure that this rigidity and this focus on control is completely appropriate when we move into actually implementing those policies, when we carry out the various actions or roles which government has taken on for itself, for when you move into carrying on a task, you start moving into questions of action, not analysis, you start talking about innovation, risk-taking, adaptability, not caution, and you need to encourage such things as motivation and leadership, not analysis, within the management structure, for you are no longer problem-solving; you are actually carrying out a task.

I think the rigidity which we seem to have carried forward within the organization of our civil service often stifles these very needs or these very attempts at innovation or adaptability, and stifles any attempt to motivate or lead within our civil service. It becomes too difficult. Too many people have to be consulted.

What we end up with is an organization which tends to look inward, tends to look at its own policies and structures and tends to relate to those and does not look outward to the people it is trying to service, does not look outward to its customers, if I could use that term.

I think if we look at how we are organized and try to change that internal culture, we may find there is a great deal of potential within our civil service to do things quite differently, a great deal of potential which we can free up. We might be very surprised with the results that we can achieve.

What could we do? Perhaps we could look at making some changes to the reporting structure within the civil service. We might separate out reporting for policymaking from reporting on implementation and allow those who are implementing our policies to actually report to the very highest levels within the civil service, make them visible, allow them to be seen.

The criticism has often been made that the policy focus which we seem to have in the civil service or it has around here tends to mean that the route to the top is through policy and that those who are the most ambitious tend to evolve to that role. We need to make the actual implementation of tasks much more important, because in fact I think something like upwards of 90 per cent of those involved in the civil service are actually carrying out tasks, not making policy. Perhaps we need to look at

whether we can make some changes to allow that implementation to take place more effectively.

We might want to look at delegating more authority. I have been very surprised at how little delegation takes place within the civil service. It is a surprise to me, coming from business, as to how much authority is kept at the very top levels. I was surprised when speaking to someone who has a job within the civil service, quite a senior one, who often has to travel on very short notice, and yet he has to have four people approve his travel. It seems rather odd. Surely that person could be given a budget, maybe based on last year's travel, which he could then use as he saw fit and report monthly, quarterly, whatever is appropriate, but let him get on with the job, rather than having to ask permission every time he wants to do something.

That points to another problem which has often been commented upon in the public service or the public administration in Canada; that is, somehow we have confused the concept of making someone accountable for results or accountable for his job with controlling him when he does the job, and we have tended to focus on the latter and made the whole organization quite stifling and quite rigid.

We might also want to look at organizing how we perform tasks quite differently. We might want to look at using agencies to deliver services, perhaps agencies that could deliver services on behalf of several ministries. I know that, speaking as the small business advocate in this province, I am often speaking with small businesses that have difficulty dealing with government because they have to deal with five and six offices, all of which operate differently. Perhaps we could find some way to have one office deal with that group of people.

I have also noticed that when you use agencies or some sort of self-contained administrative structure, those working within it feel a greater sense of identity with what they are doing. They can see the results of their work, they can see the problems, and when they make a change they can see the result. They can appreciate what has been accomplished. They also start talking about their clients, they start looking outwards to those they are serving, and the whole organization becomes more flexible and more adaptable. I think we need to look at these types of things.

In the two minutes remaining, I would like to just comment briefly on what is taking place in the United Kingdom and what does take place in Sweden in terms of these issues.

The United Kingdom has recently completed some 15 years, I believe, of study of its civil service. A report to the Prime Minister has come out called *Improving Management in Government: The Next Steps*, and it makes a number of recommendations for changes in the UK civil service. What is interesting to me is that this report recommends that the making of policy be separated structurally from the implementation of policy and that different types of organization be used for each and actually recommends the greater use of agencies in the implementation of policy within the UK civil service. It is also talking about changes to the concept of ministerial responsibility, but I think that is outside what I am talking about today.

What is also interesting is in Sweden the civil service as we know it is a very small body; it deals only with policy. In fact, the ministers are only responsible to the Swedish Parliament for the policy which is developed within the civil service. The policy is then implemented by some 80 agencies, boards and commissions which report to the legislature through different channels. So again in that country they have separated policy from implementation, a very different philosophy from the one we use, but one which we might very usefully study when we think about how our civil service works.

In the few minutes that I have had to comment, I hope I have shown how our civil service, which started as a policymaking organization but then expanded, has not adapted its internal culture to the new and expanded role of government within our society. In an era where flexibility, adaptability and responsiveness are considered the keys to success, we need to see whether we can bring some of these features into the operation of our civil service. I think we owe it to the public, which expects very relevant and efficient government. I think we also owe it to those who work within our civil service to put them in a situation where they are able to do the very best job they can and bring their talents to bear in the most effective manner.

1110

Mr Philip: I apologize to the mover of the motion for not hearing the first part of his speech. I have been involved, as he will know, in chairing the standing committee on public accounts, which is dealing with an analogous matter this morning, namely, the accountability of agencies and the way in which we can work through the Provincial Auditor and the public accounts committee to make agencies more accountable and to have the Provincial Auditor's office operate in a more effective way. I will be returning to that committee momentarily, but I will read the comments of the other members who will have an opportunity to participate in this debate.

I appreciate the comments of the mover of the motion because, by listening to the comments I have heard, at least I have some idea or sense of the direction in which he wants to go. That was not clear from the motion, which I feel lacked a certain amount of focus. I think a motion, if it is to be useful, should be fairly clearly defined and not simply create an eclectic exercise which is not likely to have an end that is useful.

I want to attempt, in the very few minutes I have in this debate, to try to focus on some of the areas in which I think we can go.

The mover of the motion was talking about the Swedish social democratic system and the way in which government there really is decentralized, where there is a much smaller civil service and where I think there is probably a more democratic system in the sense that there is more participation by various community groups, interested parties, by labour and management and government.

I want to say that while I think we should be moving towards that system, we have to understand that the social democratic system of Sweden, quite different from either the Marxist system of the Soviet Union, which is breaking down at the moment, or the capitalist or free market system, has systematically set up a whole series of structures that have allowed for decentralization. Because these structures are in place and because there is a way of feeding in the various groups and creating a partnership, I think they are a lot farther advanced than we are and therefore that kind of decentralization is quite workable in their system. It is certainly something we should be moving towards.

Let me also say, however, that rigidity comes not from a system that has too direct a line of accountability but, rather, where the accountability line is fuzzy. If a public servant really does not know whom he or she is answerable to or what he or she is accountable for and is therefore open to reprimand from a variety of sources, he or she is more likely to be conservative or indeed to do nothing, because it is frequently harder to be penalized for doing nothing than for doing something that any one of a number of people who feel they have some kind of power over you can reprimand you for.

Therefore, I think what we have to do is look at the system and say that each person should know exactly whom he or she is accountable to. That kind of security then allows one to be innovative. You may decide that the person you are accountable to is so rigid that you cannot do anything, in which case you have to make a career choice, but at least there is a value to not being accountable to a fuzzy bureaucracy out there where you can be called out or reprimanded by any one of a variety of people who, for whatever reason, seem to think they are your boss.

In 1985, Price Waterhouse completed a study commissioned by the then Conservative government. The study, as members will know, was titled *A Study of Management and Accountability in the Government of Ontario*. In the course of their work, the consultants interviewed and subsequently reviewed their conclusions with a number of ministers, with all the deputy ministers, with the former chairman of the public accounts committee and with the Provincial Auditor. They also met with a variety of other people from other countries. They looked at the practices of the federal government, other provinces, the United Kingdom and Australia. So it seems to me that a starting point in implementing the resolution before us might be to review the Price Waterhouse study and its recommendations in the light of what has or has not happened in the last five years since it was tabled in this House.

I cannot deal with the whole report in the few minutes that I have, but let me just quote about three paragraphs which I think are particularly significant from pages 5 and 6 of the Price Waterhouse report:

"Cabinet should be assured that Management Board has sufficient authority to ensure that ministries are complying with board policies as well as maintaining a satisfactory standard of management. We believe that the board has, under its act, the powers needed to exercise this authority.

"To strengthen the accountability relationship between deputy ministers and Management Board for administrative rules and management practices, our proposal is to provide for formal delegation of authority from the board to each deputy for the board's management policies. The deputy will then make decisions and ensure compliance within this delegated authority. In this way, the deputy would be accountable to the board for the ministry's actions under the delegated authority. The board should be responsible to work out a satisfactory mechanism for delegating authority to and monitoring information on compliance by each ministry."

I highlight the last part, because I think that is where there has been some need both in this government and the previous government in dealing with the problem of accountability.

It goes on to say on page 6:

"Management Board must be able to act if a ministry does not comply with board policies or decisions. Beyond instructing the minister and the deputy that compliance is imperative, the board should have a clearly understood mandate to go further by withdrawing authority it has delegated to the deputy. This would be an action of last resort, taken only after the approval of cabinet."

It is fairly clear to me that successive Chairmen of Management Board, be they Conservative or Liberal, have failed in this regard. We see examples of the results in the litany of revelations by the Provincial Auditor and in studies done by the standing committee on public accounts.

I believe history will show that there is in every parliamentary government a certain amount of tension between the office of the head of state, be it the Premier or Prime Minister, and the

Chairman of Management Board or the Treasury Board, as we sometimes see that office called. But I believe that nowhere in recent times has there been a greater example of the fear in our public service of faceless mandarins in the Premier's office, in the office, if you like, of the head of state, undermining the role of Management Board than we have in the present government.

Creativity, if it is to flourish, must have a certain stability, and we have many innovative and creative public servants, and indeed we have many excellent deputy ministers, but we have to give them the assurance that their line of command is direct, that they know whom they are accountable to and that they cannot be second-guessed by people who are faceless in the Premier's office.

It seems to me that if this resolution were to be very effective, it might be useful to have an independent study done of the relationship of the role played by each of the players in the individual ministries, the players in Management Board and the players in the Premier's office. I am not sure that such a study would be terribly complimentary of the players in the Premier's office, but I think that it would be a useful study to be done and indeed it would both improve the effectiveness of Management Board and hopefully might reduce some of the unpredictable actions that seem to happen and stem from the Premier's office.

Needless to say, any action resulting from today's resolution would have to take into account the effects of the implementation of the strategies for renewal program of the Human Resources Secretariat. If I had a few hours to speak about that, I would love to address that topic.

1120

What we are dealing with is a very complex set of issues and a very complex set of relationships. In other speeches and in journal articles, I have dealt with the parliamentary side of the equation. I think we have made gigantic steps in the last few years, to the credit of all parties in this House, on the parliamentary side of the equation. We in Ontario have an excellent Provincial Auditor, who has made some advances that other auditors envy. That is with the co-operation of the government and with the co-operation of the opposition.

We have, I think, with all due modesty, a public accounts committee in this province that is recognized by other provinces to be the best in the country. There is still a lot we need to do in improving the estimates system, but we have made a major advance in the route that we as a Parliament have taken in this regard. I think we will make other advances as we start to work with the new system that was implemented only a year ago, and in which my colleague the member for Oshawa played such an important role in developing proposals, as did the standing committee on public accounts.

We are, I believe, moving slowly towards a more congressional system of government, as are other parliaments, including that of the Mother of Parliaments in Great Britain. This is inevitable in my opinion and I think it is positive, provided that certain safeguards are taken to eliminate some of the excesses and worst aspects of the American system. Of course, I refer to the patronage system, the power of unseen vested interests and so forth, which have had what I consider to be an undemocratic and unreasonable influence on the congressional system of government.

I think there is a willingness of members of all parties to try to evolve a system which is more flexible, which is more accountable and in which members of the Legislature can, through the committee system, work more closely with the bureaucracy and encourage the kind of creativity that the

bureaucracy is capable of stimulating and that we as parliamentarians are capable of stimulating.

I do not see the same kinds of initiatives, and I may be underestimating it, from the various chairmen of Management Board we have seen. I do see it from people just close to the throne in that ministry. If we look at our counterparts in Australia and if we see some of the leadership that is coming out of Great Britain at the moment, and indeed some of the leadership that the Treasury Board has exercised in Ottawa, we see that there are examples we can look at and that Management Board can look at.

I do not believe this resolution has enough ammunition in it to wake up Management Board, but if the member for Oakville South wants to take a shot at it, I will certainly help him to pull the trigger.

Mr McCague: The member for Oakville South has proposed a motion that he and I had an opportunity to chat a little bit about prior to the debate today. It is one of those motions that are very difficult to oppose, because it would be misunderstood. I am sure the honourable member had great difficulty in writing it so that it would not be misunderstood, yet I think he may have raised a few issues in here that he may not have wished to.

He ends up by saying that this has all been done "so as to meet the demonstrated needs of its citizenry in a creative, flexible and responsive manner." What this says is that there is something wrong. Sure, things can be improved but, without some concrete suggestions as to what should be done, just to seek unanimous approval for a motion like this on the basis that something is wrong, I think does show a little bit the misunderstanding of the member for Oakville South.

I came to this august body 15 years ago and I would admit that I would have written a motion probably exactly the way the member for Oakville South has written it in the first two years here. It shows, I think, a misunderstanding of what actually happens. The member refers to formulation of policy being part of the civil service. I do not believe that if a minister of the crown is doing his or her job properly, the civil service should be doing the policy side of it.

As I understand the system, the policy will be suggested by the civil service but endorsed by the cabinet. It is the minister's job to carry that through, and it is the civil service's job to implement that policy. If I have incorrectly interpreted what the member was saying earlier, I can easily withdraw, but I think he did refer to the civil service as setting policy, which is not part of its function.

These kinds of motions are always dangerous from the point of view of what kind of message they send to a very, very dedicated civil service. I think the member may not have checked with the Civil Service Commission, the Human Resources Secretariat, to see what it is they are doing and have been doing on an ongoing basis, in order to keep up with what it is the citizenry would call creative, flexible and responsive.

I know that a lot of my constituents in the riding of Simcoe West are not happy with the civil service, because they see the civil service as the person who answers the phone on the one or two calls they might make per year to the Ontario government and sometimes the message or the courtesy, whatever it is, extended to my constituents is not what I know all of us would expect it should be. But that does not mean we do not have a very dedicated, thoughtful, progressive civil service in this province.

If the member had said it would be a good idea if we could see if we could do the job with 10 per cent less, I would have

been a full participant in the endorsement of this but, as I have explained, the member writes it in such a way that it is almost impossible to vote against it. I do not feel there are the number of things broken that the honourable member does; therefore, why should we attempt to fix it?

The member may one day be in the inner circle of the Premier's Ontario and he may then come to an appreciation of just how the system works. Had that happened earlier, I suggest that the member would not be writing this kind of motion.

I believe there is unanimous consent for my colleague the member for Simcoe East to follow with the time left on the clock.

1130

Mr McLean: I am pleased to have the opportunity to say a few words on the resolution put forward today by the member for Oakville South, because I have growing concerns about the increasing difficulties the people of Ontario are experiencing in their dealings with government agencies, ministries, boards and commissions.

I want to make it clear that my remarks will be in support of this resolution, which reads that "since the problems facing society and government are becoming increasingly more complex; and that the most valuable resource that the Ontario government or any other government has are the people working within it; and that the principles behind the organization and structure of the Ontario government have not been examined for some time, the Ontario government should review its structure and its operating and human resource practices with a view to simplifying and restructuring its operations so as to meet the demonstrated needs of its citizenry in a creative, flexible and responsive manner."

The reasons for my support of this resolution are so simple that even this government can understand them. We all remember the Premier saying when he came to power that there would be no walls or barriers with this government. What the Premier and his ministers have done is to replace the walls and barriers with piles of red tape that are used to confuse, frustrate and confound the people of this province when they attempt to obtain services, assistance or access to programs they need and deserve.

In other words, this government continues to break its promises. This government has become a band of interior decorators who prefer to paper their walls with barriers, with red tape. No wonder the member has brought this resolution forward. There is a lot of work that needs to be done, and it has been caused by the government.

The colour of this tape I am talking about is red, much the same as the members' ties are. The members are proud to wear them. I want to tell members that the public service has grown by 11.7 per cent since 1985. That represents an increase from 81,429 public servants in 1985 to 91,024 in 1990. No wonder the member wants to bring in this resolution today.

I believe the successive hiring is leaving the people of Ontario with the distinct impression that this government is doing its best to throw up roadblocks and to prevent people from gaining access to health care services, programs for seniors, assistance for battered women and the disabled, legitimate Workers' Compensation Board claims and proper educational instruction and facilities for the people and the children of Ontario.

This disgraceful situation we are in today is not really because of the rules and regulations. We are in this situation today because this five-year-old government has put us there. This

government's record clearly shows that it gets a great deal of pleasure out of taxing people to death. We all know this is the same government that has bludgeoned the people of Ontario with 33 new or increased taxes since gaining power in 1985. We also know this government is getting added pleasure from strangling the people of this province in red tape.

The time has come for this government to face up to its failures and end the unsatisfactory abuse of the people of Simcoe East and others from all over the ridings in Ontario. It should end now. With this resolution, I hope it would. It should never have been allowed to happen, but it is not because of the rules; it is because of government.

We will not forget how the bank accounts of people in this province have been pillaged by the current Treasurer over the past five years. Those in desperate need of government service and assistance will not forget how tight the government drew the red tape I spoke of earlier around the necks of the people of this province.

I want to conclude my remarks shortly by saying that I support this resolution wholeheartedly. I think we all agree that the past five years have clearly demonstrated the need for a complete review of government structure and the operating and human resources practices. I think the past five years have shown us that operations must be simplified and restructured so as to meet the needs of the people of this province. I urge everyone here today to join with us in supporting this resolution.

The resolution really looks at who makes the decisions. The decisions are made in cabinet. Recommendations will come from the civil servants. The members will remember that not long ago there was a commitment of \$850 million over eight years for hospital construction. That was a commitment. What happened to that commitment? How are they going to change the rules to make that commitment be fulfilled?

Remember OFFIRR, the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program, which was cut off? Was that recommended by a civil servant or was that recommended by cabinet? Then we see in this latest budget \$48 million for interest relief for farmers brought back in. Why was the farm tax replaced? To change and to save the government millions of dollars? Who reviewed that and who brought that in? Is that the public service or is that the minister? I believe it would be the ministry.

The budget brought in dealt with homes for the aged and nursing homes to be working together and to be funded the same way, but that does not start until 1992. When the Treasurer gets up and reads his budget, is he saying that the rules should be changed so that takes effect immediately? How can he plan down the road almost two years from now to bring this policy forward?

Yesterday we had an announcement from the minister about a six-year plan with regard to the homemakers program. Why is it a six-year program when the government cannot fulfil its commitments now on a yearly basis? Does the Treasurer expect to change the rules or regulations and talk to the civil service on how it is going to change it? It is the government, the cabinet and the Treasurer's colleagues, that makes that decision.

The Treasurer indicates there are no new taxes, only on tobacco. How can the Treasurer increase his budget by over \$3 billion without any new taxes? He forgets to tell the people of all the new taxes that came into effect on 1 January. He seems to think that people are going to forget about that. They are not going to.

The Treasurer can get up and announce a balanced budget. Who announces the policy? It is the cabinet which announces

the policy. The members should remember, when they look at the statistics in the administration in all of the ministry offices—and that is where all the new employees mostly have gone to: hired in ministers' offices to shuffle paper—it is not the programs or the projects that are getting funding, it is staff in administrative offices. I say that is not fair, because it is those people out there who need the service and should be getting it who are not. So if the Treasurer wants to change the way government operates, he has a big job ahead of him.

Do members remember when we dealt with Bill 119 in this Legislature and in committee? People travelled from all across the province to have input into that bill. That was a bill whereby it was lottery funds for sports fitness and recreation. That is really what lottery funds were for, but the Treasurer wanted it to go into general revenue, and he got his way with the huge majority of the government. Those people travelled for thousands of miles to have input into that committee, the committee hearings. What did it do? The government still passed the Bill.

So if the government is talking about changing the rules and changing regulations, I think the best thing for the people of this province to do is to change the government and get rid of the ones who are making the decisions today. If the government wants to change the rules, I think it is all right to look at them.

I am all in favour of this resolution today, I am pleased to have the opportunity to vote on it, but I am sure if the member who has brought this resolution is serious, then he should be talking to his cabinet colleagues.

Mr Tatham: I am very pleased to rise and speak in support of the resolution of the member for Oakville South.

A former speaker talked about 1992. Well, European companies are girding themselves for 1992. The shape of business in Europe is starting to change in anticipation of the European Community's further integration in 1992. Companies all over Europe are revamping their business plans, moving production facilities and streamlining operations. The end result, business leaders hope, will be a revived corporate sector better able to compete against Asian and US companies.

The developments are occurring relatively quickly. In 1988 a survey of 700 European companies by the accounting firm KPMG Peat Marwick found that 63 per cent of executives were considering changing their business strategy because of 1992. Last year, these considerations were turning into hard plans. "A very large proportion are reviewing and coming up with ideas and proposals," said Ian Watt, a general partner at Peat Marwick.

1140

Sir Robert Scholey, the chairman of British Steel, said 1992 is like putting the plank to the back of the donkey. Peter Walenberg, the vice-chairman of a Stockholm bank, observes that European corporations are preoccupied with becoming more competitive. There is a need for Europe to strengthen its enterprises, he said.

Sir Robert believes that 1992 may hasten the consolidation of the steel industry in Europe. He said: "A substantial portion of the tonnage is not competitive in price or quality—labour is 30 per cent of the cost of a tonne of raw steel in continental Europe. By way of contrast, it is 12 per cent for Korean steel, 16 per cent for Japanese steel and 20 per cent for British steel."

Asea Brown Boveri has made major administrative changes to help it become a stronger competitor. Since the Zurich-based manufacturer of electrical equipment has operations in 13 European countries, it conducts all corporate meetings in

English. ABB has streamlined its corporate headquarters staff to 100 professionals running a company with 200,000 employees. With such a decentralized structure, line units have bottom-line responsibility. In fact, the company brags it has 3,500 different profit centres. He said, "We try to be big and small at the same time," said Percy Barnevik, the president and chief executive officer.

Sir Robert Scholey hinted at an acquisition on the continent for British Steel. Alfred Herrhausen, the chairman of Deutsche Bank, said he was looking at acquisitions in France and Britain. This consolidation might happen even sooner if Barnevik's vision of Europe 1992 is accurate. He predicts that over the short term only one third of European companies will be winners. Less than half the companies are competitive with Japanese and US manufacturers, he said. There will be fewer manufacturers and fewer people making the same number of units.

The European companies have a mission.

Author Joel Kotkin, talking about Japan, said that when civilizations are on the ascendant it is because they have a belief and an idea. The miracle that Japan had in the past 30 years is a miracle of will. People felt they had a mission and they were going to fulfil it. They worked hard.

Konsuke Matsushita, who died last April in Osaka at the age of 94, was a remarkable man. He built a three-person operation into a multinational corporation employing over 200,000 people worldwide. He had a belief that everything and everyone has value. The secret is to discover what that value is, then use it to its full potential. He was visionary, combined with a hardheaded, realistic and eminently rational approach to business and to life. He was committed not only to succeeding but also to recognizing the facts of the situation he found himself in, no matter how unpalatable they might be. Honest with himself and with others, there could be no other way if he wanted to run a business in a rational or constructive fashion.

I believe there is a common thread running through the beliefs expressed by different authorities.

Writer Rushworth Kidder, in talking about economic competitiveness, says competitiveness implies winning, but interdependence implies co-operation, a sharing of resources.

Terry Van Tell, a communications and management consultant, says that today's corporate setting increasingly calls for a more collegial team approach, the type of participatory management style found in Japan where workers frequently have input in the most important company decisions.

Author Joel Kotkin says we have to develop a much more long-term ethical sense based on Confucian concepts about obligations between employer and employee, and obligation of company to country.

Konsuke Matsushita said the intellectual capacity of a single genius can never be larger than the sum of resources brought together by all the members of the group or community to which he belongs. Man's true greatness lies in the ability to pool the ideas, to pool the talents, the idea that everyone on the staff should think and act as a manager.

If we are going to deliver services to our customers, the taxpayers, we have to develop a business strategy of superior service based on a team approach of participatory management. I certainly support the resolution.

Mr Mackenzie: I only want to take three or four minutes. I do want to indicate that I too will support the resolution that is before us, but I have been provoked—I guess provoked is not the right word—encouraged to say a few words by the comments of one of my colleagues who is no longer in the chamber

with us, the member for Simcoe West. I think he raised the point that had been bothering me when I read the resolution earlier today and took a look at it. I take it he was going to support it, but the thing that bothered him a bit was that he did not clearly understand it and there did not seem to be any particular direction in the resolution. Maybe that is why I think the very good presentation from the member for Oxford had any connection whatsoever with the resolution that is before us; at least I could not find a single thing he said that had any connection with this particular resolution.

I have no real objection to that in a debate of this kind, but let me point out that there were some suggestions made by my colleague the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale. He said that maybe they should take another look at the study of management and accountability done in 1985 by Price Waterhouse, and I think that is a valid suggestion. He also gave some ideas of what we should be looking for. I think there was a little more meat in it.

Let me tell members why I have one or two reservations about this resolution. The best way I can do it is, I guess, by reading it in sections and then commenting on those sections. The resolution says first, "That in the opinion of this House, since the problems facing society and government are becoming increasingly more complex; and that the most valuable resource that the Ontario government or any other government has are the people working within it; and that the principles behind the organization and structure of the Ontario government have not been examined for some time"

Apart from the Price Waterhouse study, I think that is probably true, although it seems to me there is always an ongoing look at the procedures and rules, which has something to do with this in the House, how we conduct business. But nobody could object to that first major half of the resolution. I certainly do not. I think it probably accurately describes the situation, the increasing complexity of business in Ontario today, and I think most of us would agree that one of our most valuable resources is the people and the expertise that we have working for us.

Then let me tell members what bothered me in reading this resolution and why I wish it had been a little more descriptive or a little more informative of what the member actually wanted to do. It goes on to say that "the Ontario government should review its structure and its operating and human resource practices with a view to simplifying and restructuring its operations so as to meet the demonstrated needs of its citizenry."

That is the section that put a bit of a red flag up to me right off the bat, because I can tell the member that anybody who is interested in government, any civil servant and any representative of civil servants in the province of Ontario who are interested in the way we do business and the way we may change the way we do business, is going to take a look at that and say right off the bat, "Hey, they're just looking to get rid of additional people."

I am sorry I have not got any more time. I do support it, but it could have been worded in a more effective way, I would say to the member.

1150

Miss Roberts: I rise today to support the resolution presented by the honourable member for Oakville South. I too will read the resolution, or part of it, because I think many of the speakers before me have maybe not looked at it carefully enough to see what the honourable member for Oakville South was trying to accomplish.

I think the important part in the first part that was just completed and read by the honourable member for Hamilton East was that the most valuable resource the Ontario government or any other government has is the people working within it. That is what the honourable member for Oakville South is talking about. He is also talking about the principles behind the organization to help the human resource that is there.

The member has put forward a resolution that is looking at simplifying and restructuring the operation of the Ontario government. The importance of an effective program implementation and administration is known to everyone, and the people in this province demand effective implementation of the Ontario government programs, of this government's programs or of any government programs. This is of vital importance to all people.

Devising and creating programs and policy is, of course, a very essential process, but it is only the first step. It is another thing altogether to deliver the goods, and this is what the honourable member for Oakville South is talking about: to ensure that the program is efficient and that it is put forward in an effective manner to all those who need it. We must strive for a means of delivering our programs so that they are responsive to people's needs and are flexible and able to deal with change.

We also must strive to provide the best possible service to the public, and this is what the civil service in Ontario has been doing. The purpose of this resolution is to help that civil service to continue to do that. This is to give the taxpayers the best possible value for their money.

For these reasons, I support my colleague's resolution in favour of improved program delivery. We may argue whether or not the program is the one that would be put forward by another government, but we cannot argue that it is important that the programs are delivered in a simple and effective manner. The civil service, like any other business, as the honourable member for Oxford spoke about, needs to have morale. It needs to be looked at and needs to be considered.

My colleague also referred to the problem of frustration among civil servants in administrative functions, due to the low priority that is accorded to these functions. Again, we are talking about administrative functions; not policy functions, but administrative functions. I also recognize this problem and support the efforts to alleviate it.

To be most productive, workers need to get a sense of fulfilment from their jobs. They need to be motivated. They need to feel part of a team. Feedback is the important element of this. We need mechanisms so that people are rewarded on the basis of their performance. I believe that we are moving in that direction, and I believe that this resolution will help the government to focus on that movement.

I was interested by the specific suggestions that were put forward by my colleague in trying to achieve these goals. He outlined a couple, and they are deserving of some consideration. I was also interested in the comments of the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale, outlining some things that could be done and for consideration with respect to the administration and the effective delivery of programs.

A suggestion that is intended to increase the focus on implementation, to increase autonomy in program delivery through the establishment of self-contained administrative structure, is an intriguing idea indeed. Any program may need and should have an implementation process in the program itself, and the civil service, the people who are providing the front-line service, should be part of that implementation program.

One might be wary of separating the two functions of policy development and implementation, and this is something that has to be considered. I believe the member's resolution is indicating that we in the government should look at and examine various structures and make sure that the functions, although separate, are dealt with in a fair manner.

Although distinct, the functions of policy development and implementation are complementary. Often people who design the program are the most knowledgeable about it and sometimes are in the best position to implement it. But each situation might be different. Implementation might be necessary and might be best known about by the person on the front line, the fellow—I should not say "fellow," which is very bad of me, very sexist, and I apologize for that—the person who answers the phone, the person who is at the counter may know and look at the programs and say, "This is the appropriate way, the proper way to implement a program."

As indicated before, the honourable member for Etobicoke-Rexdale looked at a review that had been done, and his development of the standing committee on public accounts as well shows his understanding of the need to integrate and make sure that implementation is part of the policy process. But in each situation, the approach may be different and may call for a unique approach.

Another consideration of which I am sure my colleague is aware is accountability. That again was spoken about by other members who spoke before me. There is always a tradeoff between accountability and autonomy. Increased autonomy might increase effectiveness, but also decreased accountability of a program might have some problems, making sure that the public representatives have a decreased accountability.

We must be sure that all members of the Legislature have their accountability; but members of the civil service, to make their jobs more fulfilling, more part of the system, should also have effective and responsive accountability. That was spoken about by the honourable member for Etobicoke-Rexdale as well.

In summary, I applaud and support my colleague's initiatives. Policy implementation is important in its own right but should not take a back seat to the often more high-profile area that is known as policy formulation.

The Speaker: The member for Oakville South may wish to use up the last few minutes.

Mr Carrothers: I certainly do. I appreciate the comments here and I think the various perspectives we have heard on this question indicate its very complexity, which was the reason that the resolution is a general one. I will agree with the comments of my colleague the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale.

The reason I made it general was that what I am calling for is a review. I pointed out that I agree with the direction the UK government is moving in, that is, separating policy from implementation because the two perhaps cannot coexist. They are uneasy bedfellows within the same organization.

But at the same time I recognize that our practices in Canada have often been somewhat more modern than those in the United Kingdom and we may not have to make such a radical change as they are making there. I do not want to presume that we need to go that far, and I am simply asking for a study and suggesting a direction.

This resolution is certainly not a criticism of those who work within our civil service because, certainly, in the two and a half years that I have been here, I have been very astonished

or very impressed with the level of dedication of those who work within our civil service.

But, as my colleague the member for Elgin has just pointed out, it is about giving them the opportunity to do the jobs they want to do, do the jobs they have come to work to do, to serve the public in the most appropriate fashion. I am suggesting with this resolution that perhaps the organization which we have here needs to have some changes made, because it is not as relevant as it could be to modern-day needs.

Perhaps we can look at different ways of implementing policies. Perhaps policies can be implemented across ministerial boundaries and various other ways could be used. We need to be imaginative in this respect.

What I am calling for in this resolution is that we review and look with a view to making things more flexible, making them more responsive and making them more effective for the public and for those who work within our civil service.

I very much appreciate the support I have had here and would ask that all members support this resolution when it comes time to vote on it.

POWERS OF ATTORNEY AMENDMENT ACT, 1990

The Speaker: Mr Sterling has moved second reading of Bill 131.

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker: That matter will then be placed before committee of the whole House.

Mr Sterling: I would like it to go to the standing committee on administration of justice.

The Speaker: According to our standing order, it states very clearly that when a private member's bill is approved it goes to committee of the whole House unless the majority of the House wishes it to go to some other standing committee. So you would like me to put the question?

All those in favour of this bill going to the standing committee will please rise and remain standing until we count the numbers.

All those opposed to its going to the standing committee will please rise and remain standing until the number is counted.

Ayes 8; nays 24.

The Speaker: Therefore, this bill will stand on the order paper before the committee of the whole House.

Bill ordered for committee of the whole House.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Would the members please show some respect.

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

The Speaker: Mr Carrothers has moved resolution 49.

Motion agreed to.

The House recessed at 1201.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1330.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Allen: Yesterday in the assembly the Treasurer attacked my activities and questions on behalf of the hungry, homeless and poor in this province as a mindless crusade. Evidently, feeling passionately about that subject unsettles the Treasurer, as it does the Premier, who occasionally refers sarcastically to my party's "theological" views on the subject of poverty.

The vast majority of food bank operators and their tens of thousands of supporters who are religiously motivated will be surprised to learn that the Liberal leadership of this government appears to consider them "mindless crusaders" for their deeply held religious convictions about the poor and their demonstrations of intolerance for the shocking contrasts of poverty and wealth about us.

Much in politics may be a careful balancing of competing interests, but for me and my party, both religious and humanistic convictions tell us that the condition of the poor is non-negotiable. There is no competition between adequate incomes for the disabled and capital gains write-offs for the rich. There is no competition between taxes on minimum wage earners and a tax on net wealth. There is no tradeoff between infants on watered formula and the paying down of the provincial debt.

The Treasurer in his budget has put the rich and the poor on the scales together. God help him. His own religious tradition reserves a terrible fate for those who forget who the poor really are.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr McCague: Maybe I can help the Treasurer. The Treasurer told us that the 1990 budget provides a solid basis for our continued shared prosperity in Ontario. It is refreshing to hear that from a government whose policies have consistently undermined the competitiveness and productivity of our economy, from an administration that appears determined to change Ontario from an economic powerhouse.

I know that the Treasurer does not share this view. When we express our concern that his policies have destroyed the tax advantages we enjoyed over major competitors, he shrugs it off. When auto parts makers conclude that Ontario is the worst jurisdiction in North America in which to invest, the government tells us that geography will save the day. When we and others suggest that his spending policies fuel inflation and put pressure on interest rates, the Treasurer tells us it just ain't so.

Now, no doubt, the Treasurer will tell us that the findings by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, showing small firms in Ontario to be the most heavily taxed in the country, are no cause for concern.

Strange how everybody is out of step with our Bob. Strange how everybody is concerned except our Bob. Strange how no one in this province has benefited more from the now-withering economic boom than the Liberal government itself. Strange how all these chickens have a way of coming home to roost.

RAMADAN

Mr Velshi: I would like to take this opportunity to inform the House of a very significant religious event for Muslims across Canada and around the world.

Today Muslims all over the world will celebrate Eid, the end of the fast of Ramadan. During Ramadan, Muslims fast from dawn until sunset. It is by abstaining from food, drink, smoking and all indulgences that Muslims are able to empathize with those who are pained by the deprivation of the basic necessities of life.

Today we rejoice and celebrate with all Muslims who are celebrating Eid, the festival of breaking the fast. This festival is an occasion for rejoicing in the revelation of the Koran and the appointment of Muhammad, peace be upon him, as the prophet of Allah. It is also a time of thanksgiving for having been given the strength, courage and resilience to complete the fast, thus fulfilling the duty enjoined upon them by Allah.

The festival begins with a festive prayer at the mosque. It is also an occasion for socializing with other Muslims and to foster a sense of brotherhood and unity among the community. After the prayer, family and friends gather together to exchange gifts and enjoy a meal.

In Ontario we are fortunate to enjoy a diverse multicultural society where so many religions thrive. For the Muslim community, today will be an occasion much the same as Easter.

I want to again take this opportunity to ask all members to join with me in wishing the Muslim community a happy Eid.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr Morin-Strom: This Liberal government has taken a workers' compensation system in Ontario that was a mess and turned it into an utter disaster. The WCB continues to strand the injured workers of Sault Ste Marie and northern Ontario. The office of the worker adviser in Sault Ste Marie is today beginning to act on cases it received in October 1988. What is an injured worker to do when it can take 18 months to even begin work on his appeal?

Under the recent so-called reforms of the workers' compensation system contained in Bill 162, the waiting-list situation is getting worse, not better, across northern Ontario. One of these reforms requires the injured worker to act on a case within stringent time limits or have the case dismissed. To help the worker facing a time limit, the office of the worker adviser must push back those already on the waiting list even farther. The offices of the worker adviser in Sault Ste Marie and elsewhere have been forced to judge one case against another.

When will this government recognize that all injured workers count, that each deserves speedy and efficient assistance? When will workers be assured that the help they need and deserve will be available? When will this government provide the resources that are so desperately needed to worker adviser offices in Sault Ste Marie and right across the province?

BUDGET

Mrs Cunningham: The government should peddle its 1990 budget as the "once and future" budget: Once we get the election out of the way, we can get on with the job of dealing realistically with the future of the province. That is a job this budget, full of vague commitments to do this by 1992, to do

something else over four years and another thing over a decade, largely ignores.

I suspect this budget has much in common with the 1987 Liberal election campaign. It is designed more to conceal than reveal the government's true agenda. I am sure members recall the 1987 Liberal agenda, the no-deal, anti-free trade position, the promise of lower auto insurance rates, the commitment to fund 4,400 new hospital beds.

Today the Liberals run ads touting the benefits of the free trade agreement. Their policy on auto insurance resembles a pile-up on Highway 401. The commitment to those hospital beds has simply evaporated. No doubt a similar fate awaits much of what we read in this latest Grit wish list.

This government has consistently assigned more importance to public relations than to public policy. It has shown itself more proficient at dreaming up slogans than implementing solutions to problems. The 1990 budget is part and parcel of that approach to leadership, an approach that puts the political interests of the governing party before the economic interests of the province.

1340

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr Owen: The city of Barrie has seen considerable building activity in the past few years. Barrie is an attractive location for many people to work and raise a family in. There has been a steady growth in the city's population, which is now approximately 54,000.

One area in which Barrie excels among municipalities is non-profit housing development. Since 1987 more than 1,000 units have been built, are being built or are in the planning stages in just about every section of the city. The majority of these units were built and are managed by the Barrie Non-Profit Housing Corp. Since 1987 the corporation has seen a 475 per cent growth in assets. Many of these units were developed through funds guaranteed by the province's Homes Now program.

More non-profit projects have been built or are under development by other organizations. These include the Independent Order of Oddfellows and the 441 Huronia Wing of the Royal Canadian Air Force Association. The 441 wing was the first RCAFA wing in Canada to take on the responsibility of sponsoring a non-profit housing project and they are planning to do it again in Vespra township, adjacent to Barrie.

All the people who have been involved in the process of bringing non-profit housing to Barrie should be commended for their hard work and social responsibility. I believe they can be counted upon to manage effectively into the future.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANTS

Mr Hampton: During the past week the Minister of Health has tried to duck and dodge questions about health travel funding.

Over the past eight months, southern Ontario patients who have been referred to Thunder Bay for specialist treatment have received full funding of their air fare, hotel accommodation and meals from the Ministry of Health. In addition, the Ministry of Health has also paid 100 per cent of the air fare and other costs for a family member or friend to escort the patient to Thunder Bay.

Air fare from Toronto to Thunder Bay is \$514; for two people that is \$1,028. Hotel accommodation runs to \$100 at least, and more likely \$225 for the week; meals \$100; taxi

\$100. You are looking at a total of \$1,450 a week for someone referred to Thunder Bay.

I emphasize again that the Ministry of Health is paying the bill, not the Canadian Cancer Society. The Minister of Health has tried very hard this past week to leave the impression that it has been particular hospitals or the cancer society that would pay the \$1,450.

Let me say to the Minister of Health, drop the façade. The impression she has tried to create is totally unsupported. I have checked out her story with the Ontario division of the Canadian Cancer Society and the Thunder Bay office of the cancer society. Both offices expressly deny cancer society funds paid for the air fare or anything else. Both offices categorically state that the funding for this health care travel came from the Ministry of Health, yet someone from the north gets \$250.

BUDGET

Mr J. M. Johnson: The 1990 budget is more remarkable for what it is not than for what it is. For instance, no matter how hard the government pretends, the budget is not a break for Ontario taxpayers, who will continue to shoulder one of the highest tax burdens in this country. This budget does nothing to lighten the tax load on the vast majority of taxpayers who have seen six Liberal budgets increase the per capita tax burden by 112 per cent, more than double the personal income growth rate.

It is not a break for taxpayers, who will continue to pay the more than 30 tax increases imposed by this government since it took power in 1985. It is not a break for taxpayers, who will still have to pay their share of the \$847 million in new taxes the government will collect this year as increases and levies imposed by last year's budget come into effect.

This budget is not taxpayer-friendly. It is, rather, an insult to the intelligence of the taxpayers. This government is using this budget in an effort to dupe the taxpayers into believing that the Liberal leopard has changed its spots, that they can safely ride on the tax tiger's back for another few years.

We do not believe the taxpayers of Ontario are as gullible as the Treasurer and the Premier have assumed. Given this government's record, we are confident that the taxpayer will not be fooled again.

EDMUND C. BOVEY

Mr Ferraro: As most members of the House will know by now, Canada lost a great Canadian Tuesday night. I am speaking, of course, of the death of Edmund C. Bovey, chancellor of the University of Guelph, who died at his home in Toronto, more specifically in the riding of York Mills.

Mr Bovey, 74, was a member of the board of governors at the University of Guelph since 1979 until he was replaced last year by Ian Murray. In October of last year he was appointed chancellor of the University of Guelph.

Bovey had a distinguished career to say the least. He was chairman of Telefilm Canada and the Toronto Economic Development Corp and a director of Argus Corp, Mercedes-Benz Canada Inc and Griffith Laboratories.

As well, most people will recall that he was chairman of the Bovey commission, the 1984 Ontario government Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario. He also chaired the 1985 national Task Force on Funding of the Arts in Canada and was a member of the Order of Canada.

He had extensive involvement in the arts, including holding the positions of vice-chairman of the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, vice-president of Roy

Thomson Hall, head of the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Art Gallery of Ontario Foundation, the Council for Business and the Arts in Canada, the National Ballet of Canada and the world and Canadian federations of friends of museums.

At the time of his death, Mr Bovey had just returned from a holiday in the Caribbean with his grandchildren. He is survived by his wife, Margaret (Peg) Snowden, two children, Myra and Charles, and two grandchildren. I had the pleasure of knowing him and indeed he will be sadly missed.

The Speaker: That completes the allotted time for members' statements.

Hon Mr Ward: Mr Speaker, I would like at this time to seek unanimous consent for statements from all three parties with regard to Injured Workers Day.

Agreed to.

INJURED WORKERS DAY

Hon Mr Phillips: As honourable members know, Saturday 28 April is the national day of mourning for injured workers. Across this province, workers will be joining together in memorial services to honour colleagues who lost their lives or who were injured in the performance of their jobs.

It is a day of mourning. For many families, however, it is a time when it will be a very painful remembrance of the loss of lives of loved ones. For those of us who have shared such anguish, the national day of mourning will be a time to reflect on the terrible human cost of all workplace accidents and all workplace illnesses.

As well, it will be a most appropriate time for government, for labour and for management to reaffirm our shared commitment to a preventive occupational health and safety system in this province. As legislators, we must do all we can to provide Ontario with an occupational health and safety system that protects the lives and the wellbeing of workers. We know that a genuine partnership between the workplace parties is the true key to success. Together they must develop and deliver the safety education and training that people need to work safely in their workplaces.

I would like to commend the labour movement for its initiative in establishing an annual day that honours those who have died or who have been injured on their jobs. In keeping with this occasion, I have requested that the flags of this Legislature as well as the flags at our provincial government offices throughout Ontario be flown at half mast throughout the day tomorrow.

At this time I would also ask all of us here today to recognize those who died or who have been seriously injured at work. Therefore, I am requesting the unanimous consent of this House for a moment of silence following statements from my colleagues opposite.

Mr Mackenzie: I am pleased to rise to represent my colleagues in the New Democratic Party caucus on this occasion. Deaths and injuries, along with the slow poisoning of workers by toxic substances, take place far too often in far too many of our places of employment. It is a totally unacceptable fact of a worker's life in Ontario today.

Tragically, once again this year, just up to 31 March, another 62 workers have been killed and 134,968 workers injured. In addition, in the last few days alone we have witnessed the deaths of miners, construction workers and municipal employees.

The day of mourning organized by the labour movement in recognition of the sacrifice made by workers would be a betrayal of dead and injured workers if it did not bring a renewal of commitment by all of us to guarantee workers and their families and friends a healthier and safer future. We must reaffirm our responsibility to end the slaughter in the workplace.

During the recent public hearings on Bill 208, the proposed changes to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, one of the most moving moments occurred in London, Ontario. The labour council and local unions filed into the hearing room, each member carrying a daisy which they placed on the desk from which the various petitioners were to make their presentations on the bill. Some 285 daisies were deposited, one for each worker killed in the previous year. All 285 deaths were employees. There were no owners, no managers, no presidents or vice-presidents, no supervisors or public relations hacks, just rank-and-file workers.

Is it not strange that the Liberal government recognized the opposition to Bill 208 by business interests, who do not suffer the deaths and injuries, but gave far less credence to the workers who suffered the injuries and deaths?

1350

One year since the last day of mourning, we are still without a bill that recognizes an equal authority for workers with respect to the safety of their workplaces, the government's lack of enforcement of safety in the workplace and its inability to understand that those doing the work really are best equipped to deal with their own safety, and that is disturbing. Despite the deaths, Bill 208 is still inadequate and not yet in place.

The Liberal government insists on denying rights to its own public sector workers that are available to the private sector under Bill 208. Inquests into deaths in the workplace that might provide the remedies to save others often take months and in some cases years before they are held. Sadly, in some industrial deaths there are no inquests at all.

The income protection and health and rehabilitation process provided for under the Workers' Compensation Act, which is the immediate lifeline for injured workers, is rapidly approaching a crisis status. Delays of months and years before recognizing and paying claims is becoming the norm at the Workers' Compensation Board.

I say to this government and to all members of the Ontario Legislature, we should be ashamed of ourselves. Up until now, this day of mourning has not resulted in much renewal of a commitment to workers' safety. We are not adequately remembering injured workers and those who have paid the supreme price with their lives.

Mr Runciman: As someone who a number of years ago suffered a serious industrial accident when I was sprayed with liquid urea and continues to deal with the after-effects of that accident, I am very pleased, on behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, to acknowledge and commemorate the injured workers in this province on this very special day.

In Ontario last year, a worker died every working day because of an industrial accident, and over the past decade the number of disabling injuries has risen over 60 per cent. That is not a record to be proud of.

We in the Progressive Conservative Party, and, I assume, in this Legislature, are very much in sympathy with the justifiable concerns of injured workers. The Workers' Compensation Board is an instrument which was set up to deal specifically and compassionately with the problems of injuries in the workplace.

It is an instrument of the government and should be addressing the workers' concerns. Safety in the workplace is of prime importance and is of mutual concern to both employers and employees. The severity and frequency of workplace accidents must be reduced.

When accidents do occur, emphasis should be on rehabilitation and getting people back to work as soon as possible. Workers must be given the assurance that employers are committed to having them back on the job as soon as they are available. That is essential both for the morale of the worker and for the benefit of the employer.

It seems that everyone wants to point the finger at someone else. Victims are sometimes blamed for carelessness and employers for not caring enough about safety. Whatever the reason, the workers of Ontario are paying the price, and it is a very high price indeed. Those who have been injured on the job are worried about the future and what it holds in store for them.

Again, I am proud, on behalf of my party, to indicate our support for this special day in the province.

The Speaker: There was a request earlier that all members would rise and have a few moments of silence. Please join me.

The House observed one minute's silence.

The Speaker: Thank you very much. Because of the request, I will also make certain that the flag is flown at half-mast, as instructed.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

POWER BLACKOUT IN TORONTO

Hon Mrs Caplan: It is said that the best in people often comes out during the worst of times. I cannot think of a better example than what happened last night during the blackout in Toronto. I am sure that we were all impressed by reports of the caring, dedication, creativity and quick thinking exhibited by those faced with life and death situations under such adverse conditions.

On behalf of the government, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of everyone who contributed to the quick and successful response to the emergency. I particularly commend the efforts of those professionals who responded during the blackout. The police, fire and other emergency response units deserve our highest commendation for their professional and co-operative actions last evening which ensured the highest possible level of public safety. Of equal importance were the responsible actions of our citizens which reinforced the level of security within our communities.

Emergency power systems were in place in case of such an occurrence as last night. When further problems arose, steps were taken immediately to deal with the situation. Ambulances were rerouted away from all emergency departments in downtown Toronto. This was done quickly, efficiently and without incident by ambulance dispatchers, relying on the central resource registry which links all emergency departments in Metropolitan Toronto by computer. An emergency operations room was set up at the Metro Toronto headquarters for ambulance services to establish links with the affected hospitals to meet whatever needs they had. Cardiac monitors and portable suction were made available to Mount Sinai and St Michael's Hospital when they were completely without power. As well, a portable generator was sent to St Michael's to help with the auxiliary power.

Most members no doubt heard of the heroics demonstrated at Mount Sinai where five critically ill babies were rushed

through the tunnel under University Avenue to the Hospital for Sick Children. I am sure as time goes by we will be hearing and marvelling at numerous other inspiring stories of how the doctors, nurses and health professionals on the front lines responded during this crisis. Again, my utmost appreciation and admiration to all in the health care field who prevailed during those desperate hours of need last night.

Mention must also be made of the key role played by Ontario Hydro's emergency crews. By 11:30 pm, just over two hours after the failure of the transformer, electricity services had been restored to 90 per cent of Hydro customers. By 1:10 in the morning, full service had been restored. These emergency crews are to be congratulated for the speed and efficiency that they brought to their task.

I also want to commend the swift response of the East York Fire Department, which had to extinguish the fire in the transformer station before Hydro's crews could begin their work.

I should also mention that the Ministry of the Environment personnel made an inspection of the site and determined that there were no safety risks from PCBs as a result of the transformer fire. The Ministry of the Environment spills action centre was notified of the explosion and an emergency response person was sent immediately to the site. He conducted onsite sampling of soil, water and oil from the exploded transformer and worked with city and other officials to contain the spread of contaminants in the sewer system. The Ministry of the Environment is continuing onsite monitoring today.

It is indeed reassuring to know that when things do not operate as they should in this modern world of technology, we have the invaluable resource of dedicated and caring people to see us through these critical times.

1400

TAXATION

Hon R. F. Nixon: As I said in the budget statement on Tuesday, the government is making a significant enrichment to the Ontario tax reduction program in 1990. These improvements will benefit low-income working families that have children under 19 years of age or dependants with disabilities.

Raising the threshold at which Ontarians begin to pay provincial income tax is an ongoing part of the government's commitment to improve fairness in the tax system. This fiscal year we are doubling the amount of spending on the tax reduction program. This improvement to the tax reduction program will benefit 115,000 families, providing additional income tax cuts for up to \$200 for each child or a dependant with a disability who is cared for in the home by a low-income working adult.

A single working parent with two children currently does not pay Ontario income tax on income under \$14,100. As a result of this year's budget initiative, that parent will now pay no Ontario income tax on income below \$18,700. If one of the children has a disability, the parent will not pay tax on income below \$24,500.

With this expansion of the Ontario tax reduction program, all families earning the equivalent of the maximum social assistance benefit will not pay Ontario income tax in 1990. In total, 625,000 Ontario taxpayers will have their income taxes reduced or eliminated by this program, at a total cost of \$88 million in 1990-91. The improved tax reduction, together with the almost \$900 million in property and sales tax relief provided this year for lower-income and senior households, will bring to almost \$1 billion the cost of our tax relief programs.

CHILD CARE GARDE D'ENFANTS

Hon Mr Beer: I would like to provide members of the House with further details about child care measures announced by my colleague the Treasurer in his budget.

J'aimerais transmettre aux députés de cette Assemblée des détails supplémentaires sur certaines mesures dans le domaine des services de garde d'enfants que mon collègue le Trésorier a annoncé dans son budget.

Over the last five years the government has quadrupled funding for child care, from \$88 million in 1985 to \$396 million this year; \$257 million of this is 100 per cent provincial funding. Through this expenditure we have doubled the number of subsidized spaces and introduced the direct operating grant which increased the salaries of child care workers.

I would like to provide details today of \$20 million allocated in the budget for child care.

Of the \$10 million the Treasurer referred to in his budget, \$2 million will provide direct operating grants for 3,200 new licensed child care spaces; \$8 million will be used to provide 1,600 subsidies to support those new spaces and help families who need assistance in paying for child care. About half of the 3,200 spaces will be in new schools, as a result of the Ministry of Education's child care capital initiative. The other half will be in community-based centres.

As well, we value our partnerships with municipalities. As a result, we are currently providing \$10 million to assist them in meeting their child care responsibilities. Specifically, this funding will assist certain municipalities which are facing extreme pressures in purchasing subsidies in the community.

When we announced our New Directions for Child Care, we did so with the understanding that the federal government would launch a national child care strategy. That has not happened. Indeed, the federal government has placed a limit on its contributions to Ontario's child care system.

Still, in addition to the funding I am announcing today, the government is moving ahead on a number of other fronts this year.

My ministry is proceeding with its review of Ontario's child care legislation, the Day Nurseries Act. This review is being conducted to support our continuing development of a stable and good-quality child care system by developing simpler, more up-to-date legislation.

My ministry has already moved to improve enforcement practices in licensed child care centres, and I will be tabling the final report of the enforcement practices review this spring.

We intend to pursue our commitment to child care. This pursuit, however, must be done in view of the new reality presented by Ottawa.

As growth continues in Ontario's child care system, the federal government has imposed a five per cent limit on the Canada assistance plan, or CAP, as it is popularly known. The implications of the federal government's actions are profound for Ontario. In practical terms, it means that programs traditionally funded under CAP, such as child care, will not be fully cost-shared by the federal government.

L'Ontario s'est engagé de façon claire et nette à l'amélioration de ses programmes de garde d'enfants. La création d'un programme de garde d'enfants d'un calibre élevé requiert la collaboration à l'échelle nationale de tous les intervenants, y compris le gouvernement fédéral.

La déclaration que le ministre fédéral de la Santé et du Bien-être social a fait récemment sur la stratégie fédérale des

services de garde, attendue depuis longtemps, constitue par conséquent un geste encourageant.

Ontario is clearly committed to improvements in its child care programs. Building a high-quality child care program requires a national partnership with all those involved, including the federal government. The federal Minister of National Health and Welfare's recent statement about the long-awaited national child care strategy is therefore encouraging. It is my hope that Ottawa will restore its traditional role as a partner in child care and other social services throughout Canada. Ontario's commitment is firm and constant, and it will remain so.

RESPONSES

POWER BLACKOUT IN TORONTO

Mr Reville: Those of us on this side are pleased to join with the Minister of Health in paying tribute to all those hundreds of people who responded so alertly to the power blackout crisis that was created last night. I should note, however, that heroism is part of the daily job description of many of the workers she mentioned.

I am surprised that the minister did not speak to the question that is very much on our minds, which is, how could it be that the emergency power systems at two major downtown hospitals failed to operate effectively when called upon. We expect a full report very soon from the minister on how she intends to deal with the inadequacy of emergency power sources in all 222 hospitals.

TAXATION

Mr Laughren: I want to respond briefly to the Treasurer's statement of today. Yesterday the Treasurer announced a \$140-million exemption in taxes to the private sector; today he has announced a \$38-million exemption to the lowest-income earners and the most vulnerable people in our society.

The Treasurer brags that with this program a single parent with two children will no longer pay taxes unless he or she earns more than \$18,700 a year. That surely is still about \$5,000 below the poverty level as established by Statscan, and that surely is unacceptable.

It still remains a fact that in this province a single person earning the minimum wage of \$5 an hour will still pay income taxes to this province totalling \$368 a year. That fact makes a more important statement about this government than all the statements this Treasurer has ever made in this House or ever will make.

CHILD CARE

Mr Allen: I want to rise to respond to the announcement of child care initiatives by the Minister for Community and Social Services. It is interesting that gone is the rhetoric of commitment to child care as a public service in these announcements. Now we hear only of minimal improvements that leave thousands of families, especially in the low-income category, still struggling to find scarce subsidized spaces.

The minister's figures sound grand, \$396 million, but when one discounts the announcements that have already been made, the transfers that have already been announced, that leaves \$142,443,680 which will have to cover, for example, expansion of spaces, direct operating grants, new capital money—both major and startup—as well as ongoing funds for program development, and clearly it is inadequate. It amounts, in point of fact, to a 16 per cent increase, but that compares with a 30 per cent increase in each of the last three years. In other words,

what we are getting this year is a 50 per cent cutback in the pace of development by this government in the child care system.

The \$10 million allocated for new spaces, for example, will not even provide service for one quarter of the eligible families that are now there on waiting lists. That means, at \$5,000 per space, 2,000 new spaces, as against 4,000 spaces last year.

Again, the child care workers, with their subpoverty wages, will have to endure further in that condition. They were left out of the pay equity legislation. Their incomes at this point in time are 20 per cent less of the average wage than they were in 1984, when they represented 66 per cent of the average industrial wage, and now they are 47 per cent of the average industrial wage. These child care workers, in short, have been overlooked one more time, even though this budget provided \$58 million in increased compensation for other social service workers.

Those who look to the child care system to provide healthy beginnings for children who will one day become productive workers or non-productive workers, depending upon their start in life, will of course not see too much to hope for in this pace of development. One can only conclude that the government appears to have given up on the concept of child care in Ontario as a basic public service for the children and families of Ontario.

1410

Mrs Cunningham: In response to the child care announcement today, of course we are always pleased to see improvements in the availability of child care spaces across the province of Ontario. On behalf of the families, one would say thank you.

At the same time, though, it seems to me that the most important issue in child care right now is the quality and the standards of care. We have been asking for that now for over two years and the fact that this announcement today advises us that this spring we will receive that review leaves the question out there for many families and certainly many workers in child care facilities across the province of Ontario. I should underline too that the Provincial Auditor, in his most recent report, underlined his tremendous concern about enforcement and about quality of care, which takes us into the next question.

When I first came down here, I had already been working in the community towards a new Day Nurseries Act, a new act that would in fact relate to today's needs, and it just simply has not happened. It does not say in this announcement when it will happen. We have been waiting a long time. We are pleased about the spaces but we must make certain that they go to deserving families. The auditor also said that there is abuse of the system that should be taken care of. I would point out these problems to the minister.

TAXATION

Mr McCague: In relation to the statement made by the Treasurer, it is encouraging that he has carried on the tradition of making those less fortunate, those on lower incomes, exempt from tax. I think, if the Treasurer were to do something in the area of affordable housing, this might not be as necessary, but I just congratulate him for putting the cost of living up so high in this province that he has to give it back at the bottom end.

POWER BLACKOUT IN TORONTO

Mr Cureatz: It gives me a great deal of pleasure to have the opportunity of responding to the Minister of Health's statement. Of course, I want to say to her that it is very difficult to

be critical of such an all-consoling statement and we are very supportive, but the interesting aspect is that she covered various other ministries, for instance, the Ministry of Energy. I see our Minister of Energy is not present so I want to direct some thoughts and comments in that area.

Through this minister, I want to remind the Minister of Energy, when she makes her way forward in a day or two, that I have been mentioning to this government, time and time again, that the energy policies concerning electricity in the province of Ontario have been disastrous. It is too bad the minister is not here because actually I was on, finally, for question period, after begging the question period chairman to get me on and the minister does not show up today. My luck.

But let me remind the Treasurer, it is interesting, I remember days ago, when we were the government and he sat over there and he had crocodile tears about, "Where are all the Conservative cabinet ministers?" I would like to know that myself now, actually. Let me say to him, "Where are all the Liberal cabinet ministers now?" Oh yes, I am looking, there are three of them in the front bench. Where are all these wonderful people who are guiding the province of Ontario? There is no guidance, I say through the Minister of Health to the Minister of Energy, concerning the production of electricity.

Where is everybody else? Are they all at the baseball game? I will give some free advice to all the Liberals over here. They had better get back to their ridings because there are going to be a lot of them who are going to be gone. One of the reasons they are going to be gone is that there has been no planning for, among other things, the production of electricity.

Last summer, we saw the possibilities of brownouts in the province. Last night, we saw a major blackout in downtown Toronto. It was for a short period of time and, of course, I say to the Minister of Health, as she said in her statement, that indeed we give credit to all those individuals who were able to compensate and work quickly to remedy the situation.

But the long-term policies of this administration are going to show that, among other things, it is giving no guidance to major policy fields, certainly in the area of electrical production. Time and time again, we have heard from this administration that it is concerned about acid rain and is not going to build any thermal plants. Now, of course, as we have seen recently down in Windsor, they have taken the freeze off, after so many years, on building nuclear power plants.

When is the government going to give us the decision? I know when they are going to let us know: after the election, when the electorate has made its decision. Of course, we are presuming that the Liberals are going to be back, but I have words to all the Liberals over there. They are not going to be back. Trust me. The Liberals are going to be like so many pieces of paper just blowing in the wind and they are going to be ashamed that they did not bring forward positive policies in this legislative process today.

The Speaker: This might be the appropriate time to remind the member who has just spoken that yesterday a member of his caucus rose and made some comments regarding a member referring to other members who were not in attendance. I tried also to draw that to the attention of all members and I hope they will follow that tradition in the future.

VISITOR

The Speaker: I have also been informed that we have a visitor in the gallery, a former member from Guelph, Harry Worton.

ORAL QUESTIONS

TAXATION

Mr B. Rae: On Tuesday the Treasurer was quoted, in one of the newspapers of the province, as admitting that if somebody in Metropolitan Toronto earned \$5 an hour, that person would have to rely on food banks. Those are words that apparently came out of the Treasurer's mouth.

Yesterday my colleague the member for Nickel Belt clearly established that a person earning the minimum wage of \$5 an hour would have had to pay, in 1989, \$360.40 to the Ontario government for personal income tax. This means that the Treasurer has created a most bizarre world where someone earning the minimum wage, on his own admission, living in this community of Metropolitan Toronto, will have to use a food bank at the same time as he will be paying \$360 to the Ontario government.

I want to ask the Treasurer just how he squares that. What kind of sense does it make to be forcing people who are using food banks to be paying income tax to the Ontario government?

Hon R. F. Nixon: Those same people are paying almost double that amount to the government of Canada.

Mr D. S. Cooke: What is your point?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The point is that the personal income tax base across Canada goes into effect at below the minimum wage level, at actually \$8,100 for a single person. That is below minimum wage, and it is at that point that the honourable member weighs in with his views. All of the provinces have this basic personal income tax and we in Ontario have a tax reduction program which, in the five years that I have been Treasurer, has taken about 625,000 off the tax rolls, people who are still eligible to pay income tax at another jurisdictional level.

This year, in enriching the Ontario tax reduction, we have focused on low-income families with a \$200 reduction, not in taxable income but in taxes payable for each child, with additional reduction for any disability in the family. We feel that this is a move towards an improvement in the progressivity of the system.

Mr B. Rae: The fact remains, and the Treasurer cannot get around it, that on Tuesday he admitted that the minimum wage in Ontario was so bad that there would definitely be people who would be having to go to a food bank who were being paid the minimum wage, a minimum wage established by his government. It is his government that establishes that wage. Now he is admitting that that same person earning \$5 an hour is having to pay \$360 to him.

I would like to ask the Treasurer how he squares that fact with the fact that in this province there are 40,000 corporations, working again under the provincial income tax system, under rules devised by him, earning over \$11 billion in profits, which do not have to pay a cent of tax in this province, at the same time as the person making \$5 an hour is paying \$360 a year. What kind of sense of fairness does that make?

1420

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member is aware that corporation income taxes have sections within them that entice and encourage the investment in expansion in this province that makes the jobs that the honourable member and I and all members and citizens are interested in.

In this regard, it has been so successful that we have the lowest unemployment rate in Canada and we are very proud of

it. We expect to create 64,000 new jobs in this province. As a matter of fact, the unemployment level in Toronto, which is the area the honourable member represents, has one of the lowest unemployment rates that you can find anywhere for the last decade. We feel that our policies have been very productive in this regard.

Mr B. Rae: They have been productive for the Treasury in the sense that the ministry continues to stick it to the ordinary person and lets the corporations that are doing well, thank you very much, get off without paying a cent of taxation. That is the reality of his tax system.

I want the Treasurer to square this. We have somebody making \$5 an hour who, on the Treasurer's own admission, may have to use a food bank. He is paying \$360 a year to the Ontario government at the same time as he is using a food bank, and the government has this incredible source of income from corporations earning over \$11 billion that are not paying any tax.

I would like to ask the Treasurer again just how he squares 40,000 companies making money and getting off scot-free and somebody making \$5 an hour, having to use a food bank and having to pay income tax at the same time.

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member perhaps was not in his seat for members' statements or he would have heard the member for Simcoe East criticize me with almost as much vehemence, if not eloquence, as the Leader of the Opposition for having a tax regimen for corporations that is the highest in Canada. He was wondering whether we were going to adjust that so that the competitive situation would be improved here.

The honourable member realizes, of course, that because of our policies, the utilization of food banks has been reduced in general by seven per cent. But the most important thing is the targeted situation where families, that is, families with children, have reduced their reliance on food banks by 25 per cent.

I personally believe that this is due to the implementation of the Social Assistance Review Committee recommendations, which began a year ago and which will continue this year with the expenditure of \$403 million above and beyond last year's expenditure. We feel that this is an appropriate move which will at least attempt and move towards the alleviation of any situation that the honourable member might criticize.

Mr B. Rae: I still did not hear an answer to my question about the minimum wage. We will come back to it.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr B. Rae: I want to ask the Treasurer today some questions about northern Ontario. I asked this line of questions before. I still have not had a clear answer from the Treasurer.

I would like to say to the Treasurer, before he gets overwhelmed by his own complacency, that he has taken on a mining profits tax this last year which has produced \$197 million and stumpage fees which have raised, he has agreed and recognized, almost \$100 million in the last year. That means that in the last year the resource industries of northern Ontario have produced revenues for the government of Ontario of \$300 million, that is, one third of a billion dollars.

I want to ask the Treasurer a simple question. Why is it that the northern Ontario heritage fund is getting only 10 per cent of that? Why would he accept a 10 per cent solution for northern Ontario when it really means that northern Ontario is subsidizing the rest of the province and subsidizing the government of Ontario to the tune of \$290 million?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member is undertaking voodoo arithmetic which is meaningful only to himself. The honourable member is also aware that he just got through criticizing me for having taxes that were too low and now he seems to imply that we are taxing the mining companies and the forest companies too much. His irrationality in this regard boggles the mind and takes my breath away.

The honourable member will also know that the northern heritage fund has now had transferred to it over the last three years \$100 million—\$90 million plus interest—and my colleague the minister in charge, who I understand is in the north today, with the Premier and the Minister of Natural Resources, is responsible, along with a representative board, for the expenditure of those funds.

The honourable member, since he is repetitious in his approach to these issues, will be glad to know, of course, that at the same time, government policies have transformed and transferred more than 1,600 full-time government jobs to the north. Since he may have something to say in supplementary, I will rest my case for the moment at that point.

Mr Hampton: It is quite a fact now that every time the Treasurer is asked a question about northern Ontario, he refers to 1,600 jobs that went to North Bay, Thunder Bay, Sudbury and Timmins, as if those were the only places that exist in northern Ontario.

I want to ask the Treasurer again about \$100 million in stumpage fees. The only extra thing he could find in his budget for northern Ontario was \$18 million for forest regeneration. He made special note of that in his budget as if it were something wonderful. How far does his \$18 million for forest regeneration go when, at the hearings in Thunder Bay, it is acknowledged that there are now 3.8 million hectares of cutover land that has not been regenerated or, if you wish, nine million acres that has been cut over and not regenerated? How far does his \$18 million go when he took \$100 million in stumpage fees?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am surprised that the member, with the advantages of an excellent Ontario education subsidized by the taxpayers, would be at the point where he is not better informed. He is surely aware that we have allocated an additional \$30 million for mining exploration.

It may be because he comes from Fort Frances that he thinks there are no mines in the north, only forests. I am amazed at his rather narrow, tunnelized provincial view of the matter. I happen to have the list here. Besides the \$100 million in the heritage fund already referred to, there is \$30 million of new funding for mining exploration, which is very important in certain parts of the north.

As far as forestry is concerned, it is not \$18 million. It is \$232 million for the management of our forest resources, as well as an open-ended account for the fighting of forest fires. Last year, that was an additional \$75 to \$80 million.

Mr Pouliot: Any time the Treasurer wishes to talk about mining, we will oblige, aside from mining our pockets.

The whole philosophy behind the heritage fund is to provide the means, the tools for economic diversification and to build infrastructure in the north. The Treasurer does so when the going is good, and heaven will attest that the going is good indeed. He is under record provincial revenues and he could use some of those revenues at Hemlo, for instance, to help other communities in the north that need his help so much.

When will the Treasurer stop milking the north and have a sense of reciprocity in this kind of affair between the north and

the south and return some of the mining taxes and some of the forestry taxes that we send down south every year?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The member is perpetuating a myth near and dear to the hearts of a diminishing handful of socialist representatives from the north, and that is the concept of milking the north. That is simply not true. The member knows that that is the case.

As a matter of fact, as a resident of a northern municipality, he should be aware that the per capita unconditional grants that the municipalities receive are double those received on the average in southern Ontario. The member, coming from his community, must be aware of the \$14 million in new funding made available for the Indian communities. I would think if there was any milk of human kindness in the soul of the honourable member, and I have given up on most of his colleagues in this regard, that he would be prepared to acknowledge that.

The members also referred to the royal commission on forest resources. It probably is not very politic of me to say so, but if we could redirect the allocation of the millions of dollars directed to that royal commission and put it at the service of the northerners, it might have almost as much good.

SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED

Mrs Marland: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Some four regional offices of the Canadian Paraplegic Association will close on 1 May for lack of funding. We know that his ministry in fact, rightfully so and graciously accepted, has committed some \$2 billion to long-term care. Of course, included in those services would be the disabled.

We have a program that is going on right now to support the quadriplegic community across the province of Ontario. Why would the minister not see fit to continue with something he knows is working? It is just as important as those new programs in the future.

1430

Hon Mr Beer: I am aware of the situation facing the Canadian Paraplegic Association and have been in correspondence with it. As the honourable member might be aware, a few years ago the association received an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant and expanded the number of its offices in Ontario. We had expressed some concerns about planning that expansion in as careful a way as possible because, as the member is aware, the foundation's grants are for a limited period of time.

We are continuing discussions with the association around those offices that it feels it is going to have to close. As the member is also aware, we are involved with them, to a considerable amount of money, on a number of programs and will continue to do that.

As to just what is the best way to go in terms of how many offices they should have and how those fit in with other community programs which are already in place, that is something we want to look at carefully so that we can make use of the available dollars and serve the people who need those services.

Mrs Cunningham: As of Tuesday there will be 300 disabled persons with spinal cord injuries who will not be receiving services. It is just fine to take a look at where they fit in and whether the Ontario Trillium Foundation should be supporting them or whether the government should be supporting them, but these programs have been provided by this association for over

45 years. This is an extension of the same money and same programs that are there today.

I think it is very important that the minister respond today in this House as to what is going to happen on Tuesday. I would be most interested in hearing about it.

Hon Mr Beer: We have made very clear, in working with the association, that we will ensure that everyone who may be affected will be properly placed and that there will be service for those individuals. We recognize that in a number of these communities there are other organizations providing similar kinds of services and it is terribly important, both with long-term care but also with all of our programs, that we try to co-ordinate and ensure that those dollars are used effectively.

I would want to underline and make very clear that we will ensure that anyone who might be affected will be properly cared for.

Mrs Cunningham: The minister knows very well that services to disabled persons in Ontario have been extended far beyond the capacity to deliver in this province today. That is why I hope the minister has looked at a long-term plan to build on those services day by day, week by week and month by month.

It is not good enough to say that existing agencies can take on this increased load, nor can his ministry offices. If the minister is talking about priorities, his own budget in the head office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services right now is over \$1 million. These people are asking for less than half that amount. I guess the question they would ask is, where are the priorities?

I hope the minister is not saying that 300 people can show up at some office on Tuesday and receive the same level of service they have had in the past. What is the minister's long-term plan for the Canadian Paraplegic Association as part of the big picture?

Hon Mr Beer: The association, as with others active in working with the disabled, will continue to be a key player with us in a whole series of programs, whether in terms of long-term care or others such as special support at home and programs of that kind.

We are increasing funding in these areas, as the honourable member will be aware. We are moving to fund other programs in terms of supporting people at home. The amount of money that is going into this area each year increases, but there is a tremendously important need for everyone in the field to work together to ensure that those services are provided in the most effective and cost-efficient way.

We think that can be done, we believe that the current difficulties the association is facing can be overcome and, as I said before, we will ensure that anyone who, for whatever reason, is not able to be served by the association will be looked after effectively by my ministry.

Mr Runciman: I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions. We were advised he would be in the House by 2:30 and he has not yet appeared. I would like to stand down my question in anticipation of his arrival shortly.

The Speaker: Fine. Is there agreement?

Agreed to.

RENT REGULATION

Mr D. S. Cooke: I have a question of the Minister of Housing with regard to an apartment building at 161 and 163

Gilmore Street in Ottawa. The landlord of that particular building went to rent review and asked for a 104 per cent increase in rent for the tenants. The decision from rent review came down in the last couple of days and the minister will be happy to know that his rent review system gave the landlord a 189 per cent increase in rents. For Evan Frank, it means his rent will go from \$363 a month to \$1,064 a month.

The major component in this building is renovation. I ask the minister again, does he not realize that his rent review system is a farce, that it must be scrapped and that rent controls must be brought in to protect tenants across this province?

Hon Mr Sweeney: My colleague will be aware of the fact that the rent review legislation does authorize the rent review officer to examine the figures that have been placed before him or her and to determine exactly what increase is recognized.

The member will also be aware of the fact—I presume he is, anyway—that on 24 April the tenants in this area launched an appeal to that particular decision. He will be aware of the fact that the tenants are therefore not required to pay the increase until the appeal has been heard.

I would point out to him that on another occasion very recently, within the last month, a similar situation existed and on appeal something like \$110,000 worth of renovations was not allowed. In fact, the decision with respect to the increase was practically cut in half. So that is still possible.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Even if that type of thing did happen, the percentage increase is still going to be outrageously high in this case. The fact that these tenants have this 189 per cent rent increase hanging over their heads, the rent review legislation allows it to be retroactive and thousands of dollars can be owing when the final decision comes through, just reinforces that the rent review legislation is not working to protect tenants.

My supplementary deals with changes in regulations which the minister brought in this week, dealing with renovations, which are supposed to help alleviate this problem. Is the minister aware that in this case, applying his regulation changes that are supposed to protect tenants, the increase in this case, instead of being 189 per cent, would be 181 per cent? Does he not now realize that even those regulation changes are not going to do anything to protect the tenants of this province?

Hon Mr Sweeney: Part of the difficulty we are all working with—and the honourable member is well aware of this—is that we have a responsibility to recognize that there are legitimate pass-through costs in order to keep a building in reasonable repair. He will be well aware, as I am, that tenants have come to both of us expressing concern about those buildings that are not kept in repair.

Our system of rent review is designed to allow the hearing officer to look at the costs that have been incurred. If they are legitimate costs, then they are allowed to be passed through, and of course they are amortized over a number of years, depending upon the particular element. I do not think the member would suggest we should put in place a situation where legitimate costs cannot be passed through. If he did, he would obviously know we would end up with a situation such as they now have in places like New York City where streets and streets of buildings are boarded up because no one can afford to repair them. That just does not make an awful lot of sense.

I would suggest to him that in the province of Ontario we do not want that kind of end result. The tenants have clearly told us they do not want that kind of end result. When buildings must be repaired and there are legitimate costs, then they must be passed through.

INVESTIGATION INTO MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Mr McLean: My question is for the Solicitor General and it concerns the long-running OPP investigation into the alleged proxy voting during the 1988 Tiny township municipal elections.

It is my understanding that the investigating officer completed and sent his report to the Attorney General's office and the Solicitor General's office on 28 March following an investigation which took about a year and a half. In a similar situation at Wasaga Beach, the investigation lasted about four and a half months and charges were laid through the crown attorney's office in Barrie.

Why has the alleged proxy violation in Tiny township been handled by the deputy ministers of both the minister's office and the Attorney General's office and not through the Barrie office?

1440

Hon Mr Offer: In response to the question—the member has posed this question and we have had some discussion about it in the past—all I can do is indicate that the matter is under investigation. It is proceeding in the usual course. This is a matter which I understand has some complexity, and I believe the allegations which the member has made are factually incorrect. The type of investigation which has been ongoing is one which is done in the usual course and that is how this matter is proceeding.

Mr McLean: The facts I have given are correct. Charges were laid from the Barrie office. This has bypassed the Barrie office. It is in the minister's office and the Attorney General's office. There are apparently some high-profile people involved in these irregularities, from what I have been told.

I would like to know the reason it is taking so long to resolve this matter. When will the minister inform this House of the OPP investigation results?

Hon Mr Offer: I think the member should be well aware that this matter is and has been under investigation, as the member indicates, for quite some time. It was a matter of some complexity and it was done in the usual way. After the investigation, discussions take place with crown attorneys to provide advice as to whether charges are to be laid or not to be laid in appropriate and reasonable circumstances.

That is how this matter has been proceeding. That is the way in which all matters have been proceeding. For the member to stand up and suggest it is being handled in any way other than that is to be factually incorrect. That is just not the case.

DECENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Mr M. C. Ray: I have a question for the Minister of Government Services. It concerns the government budget and the decentralization policy by which government jobs are relocated to cities other than Metropolitan Toronto.

The budget statement says the government plans to continue decentralizing its functions from Metro Toronto, but it does not indicate any allocation of money for that purpose, other than for the northern Ontario relocation program.

Has the minister been provided with funds for the relocation of Ontario government jobs to places other than northern Toronto, in particular to the city of Windsor, and when can we expect action in this regard and the relocation of a significant number of Ontario government jobs to our city?

Hon Mr Ward: I would like to thank the member for his question and for his ongoing interest in this particular issue. The member will know, because he has raised this with me on several occasions before, that indeed the government is looking very closely at its current accommodation practices. It is important to note that government operations in Ontario are already highly decentralized, with some 70 per cent of all employment through the Ontario government being in areas outside of Metropolitan Toronto.

The fact remains that there are still over 34,000 jobs occupying very expensive space in the Toronto region. Many of those offices are in leased accommodation. As a matter of fact, it is anticipated that those leases will cost the taxpayers of this province somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$1 billion over the course of the next five years.

So as leases come up for renewal we are looking at various locations and we will be making some judgements as to whether or not it will be more cost-effective to relocate those offices in other centres throughout Ontario, not only generating significant savings for the taxpayers of this province but also providing a very definite economic catalyst in regions outside of Metro.

Mr M. C. Ray: The people of the city of Windsor are growing quite impatient with respect to this issue and they fear such statements as "programs and policies which will take several years to implement."

What assurance can the minister give them that the inequity the city of Windsor is experiencing will be addressed in the near or immediate future rather than over a period of several years?

Hon Mr Ward: To my honourable friend I would say it is important to note that the government of Ontario does have contracts and commitments in terms of its leased accommodation in this city and elsewhere throughout the province.

I believe it is very important that, in making these judgements as to the relocation of government offices, it be done in a fiscally responsible fashion. I can assure the member that we have been working very hard on this over the course of the past year, trying to identify possible candidate sites and also to identify offset savings that may accrue as a result of this program, and I can assure him that we will be announcing details of various relocations over the course of the next several months in an appropriate fashion.

CLOSING OF CAMPGROUNDS

Mr Villeneuve: I have a question of the Minister of Tourism and Recreation. His ministry has closed down some parks in eastern Ontario because of alleged low occupancy. We have some information here that says only two of the five parks which were closed actually had so-called low occupancy.

Would the minister be prepared to look at these and have them run under the St Lawrence Parks Commission or his ministry again in 1990?

Hon Mr Black: I guess I am somewhat puzzled by the question. Just about a month ago the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry attended a meeting with all of the municipal representatives from the area in question—that meeting, incidentally, was arranged by my colleague the member for Cornwall—and we had the opportunity to discuss at that time the attendance figures at the five parks in question. At that time there was no dispute over the figures that I have, other than perhaps 100 or so here or there.

If I look—and I have these in front of me because I anticipated there might be such a question—the occupancy rate at

Farran Park was 27 per cent, at Grenville last year was 46 per cent, at Charlottenburgh was 19 per cent, at Morrison-Nairne 32 per cent and at Brown's Bay 32 per cent.

We know we have a surplus of camping spaces in the St Lawrence Parks Commission. We have been endeavouring to address these in a way that would assist the people of that area to continue to enjoy the facilities of that area, but also in a cost-effective way. We will continue to do that.

Mr Villeneuve: The minister cannot have the same information that I have, and I have the report here that says Grenville Park, occupancy rate medium to high; Morrison-Nairne, medium to low; Farran, medium to low. Charlottenburgh is low because of problems with the sewage system.

Would the minister not now tell this House he is prepared to keep these parks open for at least one more year so that either the municipalities have the opportunity of budgeting to run them or deal with private individuals so that these parks do not close? They are most important to the tourism industry of eastern Ontario. The minister calls the shots.

Hon Mr Black: I appreciate very much the confidence that is shown in me by the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, and I know that reflects the views of all of his caucus. I do want to say to him, however, that it is important that we look very carefully at this question. We have had meetings with the municipalities involved. We are involved in ongoing discussions with those municipalities and some of them have indicated an interest in taking over the operation of those parks.

In fact, I can share with you, Mr Speaker, because I know you are interested, that just yesterday we completed an agreement with one of the municipalities to operate the park this coming summer. We believe those negotiations will continue with other municipalities and hopefully will be fruitful.

So at this point I do not want to interfere with the St Lawrence Parks Commission which, I would remind members, has a board of directors composed of people who live in and are from that area and who are very representative of the people of that area. I want them to continue the process of trying to solve the problems that exist there.

1450

The Speaker: New question. The member for Nepean.

Mr Daigeler: My question is for the Treasurer. He was just here a moment ago, I think. Can I stand it down until he returns?

Hon Mr Sorbara: He'll be back in a moment.

The Speaker: I will have to take the member for Simcoe Centre.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order. Usually we just stand down the leaders' questions. I will recognize the member for Simcoe Centre.

Hon Mr Ward: Mr Speaker, I think the Treasurer is here.

Mr Runciman: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I was going to raise my question with the Treasurer. He had left the assembly. So I think, in terms of standing down a leader's question, I should have priority.

The Speaker: I am certain all members would agree. If you wish, sure. The member for Leeds-Grenville.

Hon Mr Ward: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I am sorry, I am trying to be helpful here. My understanding was that

the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry placed the last question, or is this a stand-down from earlier?

Mr Runciman: It is a stand-down.

REGULATION OF INSURANCE COMPANIES

Mr Runciman: I appreciate that the Treasurer will perhaps not be as knowledgeable on this issue as the Minister of Financial Institutions, but I am sure he will not be falling short in respect of providing an answer.

The minister may know that the superintendent of insurance has issued a cease and desist order against Firestone Insurance Co, of Antigua, for having failed to pay four claims to Ontario manufacturers totalling \$1.8 million. Firestone Insurance has 300 to 500 policies, representing a third of a billion dollars of underwritten risk that may not really be insured. Offshore insurance firms are not subject to the same standards as domestic insurers because of a loophole in Ontario law.

Hon R. F. Nixon: No loopholes when I was there.

Mr Runciman: He may have been the Minister of Financial Institutions in 1988; I am not sure. Are the Treasurer and his government colleagues prepared to change the law so that offshore companies will be subject to the same standards as Canadian firms, and if so, when?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am not familiar with the matter, but I will bring it to the attention of my colleague when he returns.

Mr Runciman: It is regrettable that the Deputy Premier and former Minister of Financial Institutions apparently does not have any familiarity with this issue, but I am going to forge ahead in any event.

In December 1988, the Financial Post's Diane Francis brought this legal loophole to the attention of the superintendent of insurance, but no action was taken to protect the Ontario public. Furthermore, the cease and desist order does not stop Firestone Insurance and its officers from opening another offshore shell company to again take advantage of the loophole. I should note that two men operating this firm have been charged with fraud by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Why has this government taken no action to correct this loophole, and how much more risk will it expose the public to before it will make a decision on this?

Hon R. F. Nixon: Same answer.

Mr Runciman: This is certainly going to assure the 300 to 500 policyholders, as I mentioned, representing the risk of one third of a billion dollars out there.

Ontario's laws currently favour foreign companies over Canadian firms, and these offshore companies can unethically prey upon Ontario residents. Despite knowing this in 1988, the government abdicated its responsibility by not taking action. Firestone Insurance is not the only potentially unscrupulous offshore company operating in this province. We require quick and decisive action by the government. Was the Deputy Premier, perhaps in his role as the Minister of Financial Institutions—I believe it was in 1988; he has not commented on that. In any event, whoever held the office ignored the warning of December 1988, and as a result of his and his officials' lack of action, several Ontarians are facing economic hardship.

The Speaker: And the question might be?

Mr Runciman: The potential is there for thousands more to suffer. Will the Deputy Premier offer any temporary protec-

tion, any words of assurance to Ontario residents because of this loophole?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I will bring it to the attention of my colleague and also add, probably in a gratuitous way, that I thought supplementaries had to do with the answer rather than simply the desire to make three lengthy speeches.

The Speaker: I would inform the members that on previous occasions questions have been taken as notice, and then there seemed to be quite an uproar in the House if the Speaker did not allow supplementaries so that members could ask for further information. That has been the custom. However, if the members wish to change that, I would be most happy to change it.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Mr Daigeler: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, that I do get an opportunity to ask a question of the Treasurer, and I am sure he will be a little bit more forthcoming than to the previous questioner.

My question is concerning a report in the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star* last week regarding a statement by Europe's largest bank, the Deutsche Bank, that in fact it is advising its clients to reduce their holdings of Canadian bonds and other securities. The Deutsche Bank feels that political uncertainty surrounding the possible demise of the Meech Lake accord will lead to a significant economic downturn in this country.

Mr Villeneuve: Ask him what happened to eastern Ontario in the budget.

Mr Runciman: Are you an eastern Ontario member? What is going on there?

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Daigeler: If the opposition is not interested in the economic future of this country or of the province—

Mr Runciman: What about eastern Ontario? We have an MPP here who supposedly represents eastern Ontario and he gets up and asks a question about the deutsche mark. Where are his priorities? Why does he not start doing his job?

The Speaker: Order. Really, I allowed the member for Leeds-Grenville to ask his question plus two other questions. Would he please allow other members to do the same.

Mr Daigeler: Even if the opposition does not feel that way, I consider the economic consequences of whatever happens surrounding Meech Lake of extreme importance, certainly to my area that I represent, the Ottawa area, to this province and in fact to the whole country. Can the Treasurer tell this House whether other financial institutions have expressed similar fears and whether, as Treasurer of Canada's economic engine, he shares this gloomy forecast for international investment if Meech Lake fails?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I think the member is very wise to be concerned about the matter. When the Deutsche Bank recommends to the people who seek its advice that they should sell half their Canadian holdings, it has to have an impact even in Leeds, believe it or not.

The Deutsche Bank participated in a syndicate that assisted Ontario Hydro in borrowing \$500 million in the European market a year ago, and we certainly have a very high regard for its professional ability and regret very much that although it had a great deal of confidence in Ontario a year ago, its concerns

with national deficits and our continuing constitutional discussions have led it to that advice. Certainly I do not share its pessimism in this regard.

Mr Daigeler: In view of the nervousness about Canada's economic future by the international business community—and I note even in today's paper a reference by the vice-president of the Royal Bank of Canada on the same subject—is the minister taking special steps to reassure investors about Ontario's economic prospects?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I think the best reassurance I could give them was a balanced budget and the reduction in our debt. I believe that the international investors would look at Canada and Ontario as a good place to invest and to hold the bonds of our nation and our provinces and our various municipalities and some other agencies. As a matter of fact, they seem to be readily saleable around the world and we are having no trouble in meeting these requirements.

There is no doubt, however, that the instability in the minds of some people concerning our constitutional future is regrettable, because this is not the first time we have come this way in the discussions of our constitutional future. Most of us in this House have participated in debates strongly supporting the Meech initiative. The Premier has taken a position of leadership which is highly commendable, and whether or not that is crowned with success, most of us as Canadians are aware that it is a continuation of our Canadian constitutional process. I do not believe that we should have anything but confidence, not only fiscal and monetary but also democratic, in the future of our nation.

1500

SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED

Mr Allen: The Minister of Community and Social Services has some promises to keep with families that look after their handicapped children at home. He will know that the special services at home program was founded in 1982 for families that were looking after their developmentally handicapped children at home. In 1986 and again last May, in 1989, predecessors of his indicated that they were planning the expansion of that program for the physically handicapped who stayed at home with their families and for developmentally handicapped adults who remained in their family situations.

Since that time, however, families that have developmentally handicapped children have discovered that their support services are declining in terms of family allocations. When is the minister going to reverse those reductions on a per family basis and when is he going to extend the program for physically handicapped children and developmentally handicapped adults who remain in their families?

Hon Mr Beer: My honourable friend raises a question which is of concern to us in trying to meet the great demand for those services. I can say to my colleague that with respect to the services for developmentally handicapped adults and physically disabled children, that program will be going into effect this year. In fact, meetings are being held around the guidelines for those programs, and it is our hope that moneys can begin to flow by the early fall, if not before. All of the various groups that are involved in those areas will be involved in that consultation.

I have, further, at the member's request a few weeks ago, indicated that I would meet with the coalition of interested groups, and I will be doing that with respect to the program that

has been ongoing. We have increased and continue to increase the amount of money available in that program, but as the member points out, the demands have grown, which has meant in some cases that the amount of hours for each client has had to drop. We are trying to work on that on an area-by-area basis to see if we can bring those levels back to what they have been.

Mr Allen: One of these families writes: "Our lives are anything but normal. I must devote all my time and energy caring for my child. My husband must work all day and help relieve me evenings and weekends. I feel it is outrageous and shocking that we must beg for help that we need and then live on the edge when we get help, fearing cutbacks."

This family is hearing that the agencies that serve them, that support them and that advocate for them in the community will be asked, under some of the minister's new proposals that he is considering, to do the adjudicating as to who among them will get service, which puts those agencies in a conflict situation. They are also hearing that 49 per cent of the budget will be devoted to co-ordinators who will help them or teach them how to access resources in the community, as though they were not already burdened with looking after their families. Will the minister tell them that this is not so, that neither of those developments will take place and burden them still further with problems?

Hon Mr Beer: I would certainly state that it is not my intention to set up a system which is going to burden those particular individuals, and I do not know where that figure comes from, but I can say that the funds that we have are intended to be used for the families that need them.

I think one of the things we are looking at in terms of trying to determine areas of greatest need is also to see what other resources are available in the community that might be able to assist families where the needs are not as great. That decision and the framework for that kind of decision, though, will be taken with all of the partners in this program together. In addition, we will continue to find increased resources to meet that ever-growing demand.

INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING

Mr Sterling: I have a question of the Minister of the Environment. I would like to ask the minister what his rationale is in providing only 60 per cent of the cost of sewage and water proposals for small communities within regional municipalities, while he is willing to provide up to 85 per cent of the cost in grants for municipalities that are outside regional municipalities. I would like to know why he is discriminating against small municipalities in regional municipalities.

Hon Mr Bradley: Regional municipalities were established a number of years ago by the government that the member used to be part of. It was anticipated by that government that one of the assets of regional government would be in fact a much larger tax base which could be utilized by that region to assist the municipalities within it. What has happened in most of the municipalities around the province that are within regions is in fact that the region has assisted those municipalities and there has been some help for them which would not have been there in the past.

I know, for instance, that the regional municipality of Niagara has helped out the smaller municipalities in many ways. The people who are in the larger municipalities which have a tax base have been generous and wonderful in many cases with the smaller municipalities. So because of that tax base that is available to them and because others who are out-

side the regions do not have the same tax base or potential for assistance, there is up to 85 per cent for those who are outside regions.

Mr Sterling: I would like to bring to the minister's attention the small village of Marionville which is on the border between my riding and the riding of the Deputy Speaker. Approximately 70 per cent of Marionville is in the other riding and in another county and there are about 15 homes along one side of the road which are in Marionville.

The problem with the split kind of financing which the minister is trying to justify on the basis of some concept which he understands—which I have never understood before or never knew existed before. These 15 homes are being denied water and sewage because the grant to them can only be 60 per cent, whereas for the people across the road it is 85 per cent.

I do not understand. Since the region is not willing to soak up this extra cost, who does the minister expect to pay the extra 15 per cent to 25 per cent? Does the minister expect the 15 residents along the other side of the road in Marionville to pay that extra 25 per cent?

Hon Mr Bradley: I too share the surprise of the member for Carleton that the region would not be prepared to financially assist those communities, because the region does have that tax base. In addition to that, the member may be aware that when his government was in power, the maximum amount of money that would be available for projects for the region itself, a region-wide project—in other words, under the auspices of the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton—would in fact have been 15 per cent.

I initiated a program in Ontario on behalf of people in areas such as that so that they could have potentially up to 33 per cent of the project paid. So the region has benefited rather immensely from the dollars that were freed up, obviously, from the very generous consideration of projects within the region in which he lives.

I would have thought that the region would have been willing to assist the smaller communities that are part of that region and want to feel part of that region. I think they would feel part of that region even more if indeed the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton were to assist them with the additional dollars which have been freed up from the generosity of this government.

MUNICIPAL REORGANIZATION

Mr Owen: I have a question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. In January the minister announced a plan which was to restructure eight municipalities in the south part of Simcoe county into three larger and stronger municipalities.

In my riding of Simcoe Centre, the township of West Gwillimbury and the town of Bradford were amalgamated into one municipality and, following the guidelines set by the minister, a transition team including representatives from each municipality was established. They have been working for several months now towards ensuring a smooth transition into this larger municipality. I wonder if the minister could update the House as to the status of these negotiations.

Hon Mr Sweeney: I am pleased to share with my colleague that during the three months that the transition team has been in operation, it has been very successful indeed in resolving a number of very contentious issues that it drew to my attention in January when the team was set up in the first place.

They had indicated to me at that time that they were going to have some difficulty with some of these issues, but let me

share with my colleague that they now have agreed as a transition team on the names of the new municipalities; they have agreed on the composition of the new municipalities; they have agreed on the council representation of the new municipalities; they have agreed on public utility and police commission composition of the new municipalities; they have agreed upon employee protection and a number of other things.

I want to share with my colleague how pleased I am that they have been able to accomplish so much in such a period of time, which is clearly a reflection of their willingness to cooperate with one another.

1510

Mr Owen: The transition teams have indicated to me that they have some concern about the status of the necessary enabling legislation that would be required for the amalgamations to go ahead. They feel that after all their work they know the enabling legislation has to proceed, and yet they are concerned with the delays in the Legislature that have been taking place over the last number of weeks as to whether or not we will ever be able to reach the legislation that is required for this to proceed.

I wonder if the minister can comment on these apprehensions that have been shared with me by the members of the transition teams.

Hon Mr Sweeney: One of the causes of the delay in introducing the legislation is, partly at least, my commitment to the transition team that we would incorporate into the legislation its particular findings. We now have a good start on that and the legislation is in process. I fully intend to have it introduced into the Legislature itself. I am looking forward to doing it within a month.

However, what I cannot guarantee him, as he said, given the situation in the House at the present time and the difficulty of passing legislation, is that it will in fact be passed, but I will guarantee to him that it will be introduced. If we can get sufficient co-operation, it ought to be passed as well, but I cannot guarantee that.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Reville: My question is to the Minister of Health and it refers to a statement in the budget that describes a consistent level-of-care funding system, which will be introduced for homes for the aged and nursing homes. The Minister of Health is responsible for only half of that statement, but we do not know how much money is involved.

Because the ministry was so tardy in requiring nursing homes to meet the requirements of the Nursing Homes Amendment Act passed in 1987, I cannot imagine that the minister has any financial information on what nursing homes currently do with the \$400 million worth of public funds they get. Why does she now think nursing homes might need part or all of \$200 million more, or is this a giveaway?

Hon Mrs Caplan: My colleague the Minister of Community and Social Services tabled some time ago the principles for long-term care. One of those principles was moving to a focus on people, rather than the name on the door of the institution or the label on the bed they happened to be in, in that institution.

The goal of long-term care reform is to focus on the person, on the level of service he needs, and to develop a funding formula that will respond appropriately to ensure that whether

that person is in an institution or in the community he is receiving appropriate services.

Mr Reville: What we got was a focus on hocus-pocus. The previous Minister of Health said, "No money without financial accountability." That is what he said. We still do not have it. The information required by the act is just beginning to come into the Ministry of Health, and not one financial statement is posted in any nursing home in this province as required by the act.

It makes you worry that we hear about \$180 million in co-payments on the one hand; we hear on the other hand about \$200 million more for private sector providers. We know that there is a lawsuit against this government by the Ontario Nursing Home Association, and we could be forgiven for wondering whether the Ministry of Health is going to buy off this lawsuit out of the pockets of the elderly and the disabled in the community. Is that so?

Hon Mrs Caplan: The member opposite refers to regulations under the Nursing Homes Act. He knows that there were extensive consultations and that the new regulation is now in force. It sets out the form and the manner in which financial and operating information required under that act must be presented, and this includes a requirement to prepare an audit file and post statements containing financial information. The amendment and the regulation dictate how recordkeeping and auditing requirements for financial records are to be prepared and maintained by nursing homes.

He knows as well that in accordance with the Nursing Homes Act, financial statements must be filed within three months of the nursing home's fiscal year-end. I can tell him that regulation is now in force.

The Speaker: New question, the member for Durham East.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Durham East is trying to get the floor.

GO TRANSIT

Mr Cureatz: Of course the first thing I have to do now is apologize to my chairman of question period committee, because he has come back to me and said: "All right, all right, you are winding up. You are allowed to go on." I have a great question to the Minister of Transportation. This is terrific: 1990 Ontario Budget, right here on page 3 under "Transportation"—I love it—it says immediate GO rail expansion to my riding in Bowmanville.

I want to say to the Minister of Transportation that this administration promised back in 1985 to have GO rail extension to the city of Oshawa. Five years, and it never made it to Oshawa. It got as far as Pickering. The Second World War only took around five years and the minister could not get that train to the city of Oshawa.

Now he is telling us it is coming to Bowmanville, and does he know why he is doing it? So the Liberal candidate can march around in the riding of Durham East and say, "You see, the Liberals are bringing the GO train to Bowmanville." I am going to say that I brought the GO train to Bowmanville when—

The Speaker: Order. Did the minister hear the question?

Hon Mr Wrye: I heard something akin to a question. I heard a longer speech. I was really surprised. I thought my good friend the member for Durham East was going to be on his feet claiming credit for what is the most positive announcement for

his community of Bowmanville. He does not want to claim credit, so I guess whoever the Liberal candidate is, whenever an event is, will have to claim credit because obviously that member is not interested in having GO train service to Bowmanville. The GO train service to Bowmanville will start just as soon as we can get Canadian National to agree to allow us the track time. I predict that we will be seeing GO train service into Bowmanville before the end of the year.

MOTION

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTIONS

Mr Ward moved that the following substitutions be made to the membership of the special committee on the parliamentary precinct: Mr Pouliot for Mr Breaugh; Mrs Smith for Mr Reycraft.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

Mr Allen: Mr Speaker, I have a petition from representatives of the francophone community asking that you receive 40,000 letters that have been written by their compatriots with respect to the situation at the Sault.

I wish to read the petition.

«Attendu que nous avons reçu 40 000 lettres d'appui des Canadiens de toutes les provinces demandant la révocation de la déclaration d'unilinguisme anglais du 29 janvier par le Conseil municipal de la ville de Sault Ste-Marie, nous, soussignés, désirons déposer à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario ces 40 000 lettres d'appui requérant le respect des droits des minorités et le renforcement de l'harmonie et de l'égalité entre les deux peuples fondateurs.»

"Whereas we have received 40,000 letters from across Canada asking the city council of Sault Ste Marie to revoke the resolution of January 29, 1990 that declared English the official language of Sault Ste Marie,

"We, the undersigned, wish to present the 40,000 letters to the Ontario Legislature as an expression of support for tolerance and respect for minority rights and for recognition of equality between the two founding nations."

I have signed the copies. I send the copies to the table and I wish to send a sample of these petitions with one of the pages to the minister responsible for francophone affairs in order that he might begin his—

The Speaker: Thank you.

1520

ABORTION

Mr Villeneuve: I have a petition here signed by 80 pro-life supporters in my riding and residents in neighbouring ridings. I will just read part of it.

"That the Parliament of Ontario legislate total protection for all human life, including the unborn, and that parliamentarians feel free to invoke the notwithstanding clause in order to accomplish the above."

I have signed and agree with this petition.

EMPLOYER HEALTH TAX

Mr Adams: I have a petition from a number of people in Peterborough and the surrounding area.

"We, the undersigned, wish to draw your attention again to the inequity of the employer health tax. This tax should be fair. Everyone should contribute and pay a health tax. Everyone should pay the same percentage. Everyone's tax should be based on the same levels of remuneration, not some before expenses and some after."

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Kormos: I have a petition and it is addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 68, the Ontario government's threshold no-fault insurance legislation, be withdrawn because this legislation eliminates the right to sue for 90 to 95 per cent of the innocent injured accident victims who are not seriously or permanently injured or killed. This threshold clearly discriminates against those suffering mental injuries, soft tissue injuries, broken bones, as well as those seeking compensation for pain and suffering and loss of enjoyment of life.

"It fails to fully compensate workers for lost wages due to inadequate unindexed income replacement, does nothing to discourage drunk, careless and negligent drivers by protecting them from litigation, does nothing to ensure consumer protection and lower interest or insurance rates, particularly within urban areas where predictions for rate increases by the minister tend to fluctuate.

"Although there are a number of other factors contributing to our opposition"—

The Speaker: Order. With respect, the member has the right to present petitions. There is a limit on time for petitions, in case other members wish to participate. You are allowed to put in your own words the content of the petition, but it is not necessary to read it all.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, with respect, some 125 Monarch Park Collegiate students went to the trouble to sign this petition. They have every right, I submit, to have their petition fully and properly presented in this Legislative Assembly and I thank those kids from Monarch Park. The government ought to listen to them for a little bit.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Please. There may be other members who wish to present petitions.

GREATER TORONTO AREA

Mr Philip: I have a petition that, in summary, calls on the Peterson Liberal government and the Treasurer of Ontario to stop dumping on the taxpayers of the greater Metropolitan Toronto area. It refers to the fact that we pay \$90 for a licence plate identical to those who receive it for \$33 and \$55 in other jurisdictions, and to the fact that the greater Metro Toronto area corporate concentration tax is putting businesses into receiver-ship in our area and is cutting down on the hotel business.

If it had not been prepared before the budget, it would no doubt have talked about the very poor transfer payments this Treasurer is giving to residents in the Metro Toronto area.

I have signed it and I agree with it.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Mr Ward: Prior to calling orders of the day, pursuant to standing order 53, I would like to indicate to the House the business for the week of 30 April.

Monday 30 April will be the third party budget response and the continued debate on the budget motion. Tuesday, 1 May, we will be resuming the adjourned budget debate. On Wednesday 2 May the estimates will be tabled, followed by a New Democratic Party opposition day in the name of Mr Cooke. Thursday 3 May, in the morning sitting, it will be private member's ballot item 47 in the name of Ms Bryden and item 48 in the name of Ms Oddie Monro. In the afternoon sitting, we will have second reading debate of Bills 114, 107, 96, 108 and 106 and, time permitting, any previously stated unfinished business.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUDGET DEBATE
(continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the amendment to the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Mr Villeneuve: It is a pleasure to participate in the debate on the budget brought in by the Treasurer, which quite obviously is preparing—

Mr Allen: Mr Speaker, on a question of order: I understand the normal procedure is that the official response initiates here and then the official response moves to the Tories, and usually those are considered leadership responses. Then one gets into normal rotation. I would have thought that perhaps it would have come back, to initiate the subsequent round of rotation, to the official opposition and then would go to the secondary responses from the third party. That is my understanding. Perhaps I am wrong, but perhaps you could straighten this out before we get too much farther into the afternoon.

The Speaker: I would be glad to try to straighten things out. I thought we usually operated very smoothly around here. I understood the House leader saying that they would sort of stand down the leader of the Conservative Party's comments, so I asked if any members wished to participate in the debate and the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry stood up. So I recognized the member. But I am in the hands of the House.

Hon Mr Ward: If I could be helpful, the debate on the budget began with the motion by the Treasurer. The member for Nickel Belt spoke to that and moved an amendment. It is correct that an arrangement has been made for the official third party response on Monday. I assumed we were following a normal rotation, which in my view means it will be a member of the third party, followed by a member of the government side, followed by a member of the New Democratic Party—a normal rotation as in any other debate.

Interjections.

The Speaker: We seem to be having a little difficulty here. It is up to the Speaker to recognize the first person who has the floor. I recognized the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. If he wishes to yield the floor to the member for Hamilton West, I will leave it up to him.

Mr Villeneuve: My leader is on very urgent, pressing business out in the rural ridings of Ontario this afternoon and he

will be officially responding as leader of the party on Monday. It is my understanding that it was our turn to participate in the debate and I certainly plan and intend to do that this afternoon.

The budget was somewhat of a disappointment to many people.

Mr Mackenzie: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I think there is an injustice being done here. I would really like to know under what rule rotation takes place.

An hon member: In this case, to the Liberals.

Mr Mackenzie: No, it is not. You have your leaders respond first.

1530

Mr D. S. Cooke: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: The official response was ours yesterday. The next person should be the official response from the Tories. They have stood that down until Monday. If they had given that response, it would be a Liberal. The person who should be up would be a Liberal. That would be the appropriate response. Then it would be us and then the third party. This way, they get an extra person in the rotation.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I recognized the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry because that member was on his feet, and I am going to continue recognizing the member.

Mr Villeneuve: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As I was about to say, the Treasurer presented a budget on Tuesday of this week that certainly made a lot of people wonder when exactly the election date would be in the province of Ontario. There is a great deal of speculation to that effect now, and there is no doubt about the fact that it is a pre-election budget, very similar to what was presented to this Legislature in 1987, some two and one half years ago.

At the time when this government took over in 1985, the now Premier admitted that he was a very fortunate politician indeed to be taking over the province of Ontario at a time when the economy was in full bloom and that indeed the federal government had just changed and the climate for investment and for economic expansion in the province of Ontario was certainly very positive. That prediction came very true, although we do not hear the Premier these days saying much about how lucky he was back in 1985 to have inherited a good economic situation in this province, and also to have come in following a very tough period of time when interest rates were very high.

Well, we are going back into a situation where interest rates, in order to fight inflation, are quite high. The province of Ontario is still doing quite well. However, the economic activity and expansion is slowing down quite extensively.

The Treasurer has predicted a 1.7 per cent expansionary factor, economic growth, for the next year. That turns out to be a fairly liberal estimate, according to the economists we have spoken of of late. Indeed, it tends to be possibly up to one per cent beyond the expectation of many of the bankers and the economists in this province and indeed in Canada.

If somehow or other the Treasurer does happen to have been somewhat high in his economic growth projection, it could mean up to a half-billion-dollar reduction in his anticipated \$44.5-billion income for the province of Ontario. If this occurs, the \$440 million that was estimated to be addressed towards reducing the overall deficit of the province would not occur.

Getting into the more regional areas, as you know, Mr Speaker, I come from a riding right next door to yours, and the economic situation in eastern Ontario is not nearly as buoyant as it is in other parts of Ontario. As a matter of fact, it is probably not even as buoyant as certain parts of northern Ontario.

Yet the Ottawa Citizen, of all papers, states on Wednesday morning, "East Left Out in the Cold." That is pretty brash, coming from paper like the Ottawa Citizen, particularly when it is speaking of a Liberal government. However, that heading was definitely there, and I was interested yesterday during question period that the minister in charge of correctional institutions was showing the headline to some of his colleagues on the Liberal benches. He was quite annoyed. I know he was annoyed at reading that eastern Ontario had been left out in the cold, and that is indeed what has occurred in this budget, this pre-election budget.

Locally, the St Lawrence Parks Commission has decided to close down five of its parks, something that is very, very annoying and concerns a lot of people, particularly when tourism is such an important factor of the eastern Ontario economy. The five campsites that were closed down—and I will refer to them individually, because the minister, when I questioned him today, certainly did not react in a positive way oriented towards keeping these parks open.

There is an interesting scenario. An analysis was done regarding the operational procedures of the St Lawrence Parks Commission and particularly of its camping sites. With respect to cost recovery of campgrounds, based on some of the facts that we have from across Canada, "In general," the report states, "no province recovers its total campground costs."

Some estimates of total average cost recoveries were as follows: In Alberta, approximately 50 per cent; similar for Manitoba; Newfoundland attempts to get 50 per cent but winds up closer to half of that, or approximately 25 per cent; Quebec recovers from 40 to 50 per cent; Nova Scotia is slightly under 50 per cent; British Columbia is right at the 50 per cent. However, we do have the St Clair Parkway Commission, which has an identified ratio that is much less than 50 per cent. The state of Michigan recovers approximately 80 per cent.

Very few parks and campsites recover 100 per cent, so we have to accept that we have waterfront property, it is publicly owned; it should be publicly operated for use by the public.

Of the campsites that were closed down, Browns Bay has an occupancy rate that is considered low. However, it has a cost recovery factor of 58 per cent, well above what it anticipated in other provinces.

Grenville Park: Occupancy rate estimate is medium-high and a cost recovery rate of 46 per cent, so almost at the 50 per cent cost recovery that is expected from other provinces.

Bear in mind that this also is influenced to a great degree by the fact that senior citizens do not pay for camping through the week and pay 50 per cent of the regular cost on weekends.

Morrison-Nairne campsite: Occupancy rate estimated to be medium-low; however, has a cost recovery factor of 59 per cent, again well above what is expected and anticipated in other provinces.

Farran is the lowest of all, with a medium-low occupancy rate and a 36 per cent recovery.

Finally, Charlottenburgh, in Glengarry county, is considered to have a low occupancy rate. However, it does have a cost recovery of 47 per cent.

I say to the minister and the ministry, we have five prime waterfront property campsites in eastern Ontario that are being

closed down by the government, by the parks commission, and attempts have been made by different municipalities to negotiate with the St Lawrence Parks Commission to operate them in 1990. It is my understanding that one municipality may be operating one park. It is not official or finalized.

However, I do know for sure that the township of Edwardsburgh is not in a position to operate the Grenville Park this coming year, and unless matters change very drastically, a very popular park with a cost recovery of well over 50 per cent, Grenville Park, will be closed down this year, and that is a tragedy.

1540

I want to quote from a letter that I received, and I received a number of letters. I presented a 6,700-name petition to this Legislature, but this is an interesting one. It comes from American campers Linda and Bill Knox from Columbia, Connecticut. I think it bears reading in part. It is addressed to myself and it reads in part as follows:

"We have camped in a great many of Canada's provincial campgrounds across your lovely country from Vancouver to Cornwall and have found them all to be exceptionally clean, quiet and beautifully kept. Our favourite is Nairne, along the St Lawrence River, and we have returned year after year. This would have been our eighth year if the park remains open.

"It makes us heartsick to think that we may not be able to spend our vacation this summer in eastern Ontario along the St Lawrence River. Please consider the following before closing the campground, and particularly Nairne campground: Firstly, closing a few first that aren't as well-loved and quiet as Nairne. Many are overrun with noisy young people. Nairne is a family park area and full, whenever we seem to be there, with quiet campers who take good care of their sites.

"Secondly, our strong suggestion is to do as we do in the US: Allow senior citizens a 20 per cent discount rate or even a 50 per cent discount rate through the week, but not free camping. We have noticed many seniors simply hopscotching from one spot to another all through the summer. You're losing a lot of revenue there alone. All should share in the cost."

I speak of cost recovery on most of these parks that is over 50 per cent now with the seniors having free camping through the week.

"Your small business people, corner stores, etc, near these campsites will suffer if the campgrounds are closed or eliminated. Even those enjoying camping and visiting Upper Canada Village will be eliminated. Upper Canada Village will definitely suffer. Your campgrounds attract people from near and far. You must not close them."

I could continue. This comes from someone who visits our country, who brings American dollars into our country, and I think that is most important. Eastern Ontario is known for its hospitality, its hospitable people and its beautiful scenery, among other things, of course, and the closing of these campgrounds, I think, is an absolute atrocity to the area, to the businesses and indeed to the public that uses these parks.

I have had a number of phone calls from the Good Samaritan camping organization, the Ottawa section, very concerned at the closure of the parks, particularly Grenville Park, which to those people was their favourite. Many seniors and many people who just enjoy fishing were using the site as the launching area for their small fishing boats.

So we have a whole industry, a clean industry, bringing in dollars to eastern Ontario, that is being not only shaken to its

very roots but possibly done away with. Tourism is most important.

Again in the same general area, Upper Canada Playhouse, which is live theatre based out of a very temporary playhouse just off Highway 401 and close to Upper Canada Village, had to shut down its temporary structure because it was no longer usable. We have discussed the possibility of having the playhouse incorporated with Upper Canada Village. We have had a lot of discussions. I have sent a number of letters to different ministers at different times, and as ministers were changed I certainly made it a point to ensure that the new minister was aware.

However, this has never come to fruition. It is my understanding that the playhouse operated last year out of St Lawrence College, in Cornwall. It was not a very successful year. It was almost similar to operating like a fish out of water. The people who support the playhouse basically had to drive the distance from wherever they reside to downtown Cornwall, and it was not a good experience. I understand the playhouse will operate from the town of Morrisburg this coming year.

However, we must look in a positive light at having the playhouse, live theatre, incorporated as part and parcel of Upper Canada Village. This would not only bring additional people to Upper Canada Village to see live theatre but would also interest them in the heritage of Ontario, the Ontario of the mid-1800s. So I think we have to look very strongly at constructing the Upper Canada Playhouse as a permanent structure as part of Upper Canada Village.

We can move on to education. The area that I very proudly represent is operated as the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry County Board of Education and also parts of the Leeds and Grenville County Board of Education. All boards that form part of these two boards of education have had to increase taxes tremendously in the last several years because of impositions from the senior level of government here at Queen's Park, and funding has not been forthcoming in the way that it should have been to these school boards.

We are in the far reaches of eastern Ontario, and it is interesting that the Ottawa Citizen alludes to—and did allude to prior to 1985—the fact that the government of Ontario thinks and actually operates as if the province ends at Kingston. It is even worse now. I thought, certainly upon being elected, that eastern Ontario would obtain its share of funding from the senior level, the provincial government here at Queen's Park. When you see a paper like the Ottawa Citizen being very annoyed and in bold headlines saying, "The East Left Out in the Cold by the Budget," I think we should all sit up and take notice.

Hospitals: There are three medium-sized hospitals in the riding I represent. We have one, the Winchester District Memorial Hospital, which is in serious need of additional funding. They have had a local fund drive which has obtained substantial amounts of money. However, they still have a major deficit, and it is an ongoing discussion with the Minister of Health here at Queen's Park to ensure that the hospital has sufficient funds to operate efficiently. It operates in a rural area, in the shadow of the city of Ottawa, but it is providing a very important health service to the community in Dundas county.

Roads I think we could talk on for quite some time. A question in this Legislature yesterday pertained to a dozen deaths on Highway 17, the killer strip west of Ottawa going into the Upper Ottawa Valley. It is an absolute must to twin and become four lanes, as is Highway 416. Highway 416 land acquisition was completed in the early 1980s; the land has been

purchased. We see some engineering work and some survey work being done on it, but the land was acquired 10 years ago or more; the land is there.

The road was improved considerably last year with a new coat of paving. However, it must be twinned, it must be four lanes. It is one of the main accesses to the capital of our country from the south by Americans. Highway 16 leads from the small village or hamlet of Johnstown along the St Lawrence River at the international bridge directly to the northeast into Ottawa, so we have many of our American tourists who visit the nation's capital effectively driving in on a road that is very much inferior and that leaves a great deal to be desired.

The year 1998 is estimated to be the completion year of the twinning of Highway 416. I think some urgency is needed here. I recall that during an election campaign the Premier mentioned that 1994 would be a great year, but of course right after the election that particular promise was somehow overlooked, forgotten or totally neglected.

The Alexandria courthouse has been the subject of a number of discussions here, and we do now have it reopened. There was a period of time when it was closed and all courtroom activities that would have normally occurred in Alexandria were being held in Cornwall and there was great concern that possibly the courthouse could be closed down. Hopefully this will never happen, but because of the fact that this government imposed on the local municipality the total cost of policing the courthouse in Alexandria, the mayor and council decided that they could not effectively and efficiently operate the courthouse with the amount of per-household contribution that the provincial government was providing them with.

1550

So we did have considerable discussion, and it finished up that, yes, the courthouse was reopened. However, it was at considerable financial cost to the ratepayers of my largest town, a town of 3,300 which is indeed looking after all of the costs of courtroom facilities for all of Glengarry county. The cost is being borne by the town of Alexandria. It is not fair, but it was decreed and imposed and there was very little choice but to go ahead and do it.

The Treasurer was rather eloquent when he made his presentation of the budget, emphasizing the fact that there were no tax increases. The residents of the province of Ontario are certainly paying now for the tax increases that were announced in previous years, in 1988 and again in 1989.

I will cite just one example that is rather obvious, and it is in the budget. The OHIP premiums that were provided by Ontario residents in 1989 amounted to \$1,394,000,000, something less than 20 per cent of the cost of operating the health care facilities across this province. Lo and behold, the employer health tax, which came in on 1 January 1990, is projected to recover from employers in the province of Ontario \$2,614,000,000.

That is an increase of \$1.3 billion, all borne by the businesses, the municipalities, the school boards, the hospitals, the employers of Ontario. It is a cost of doing business. So that is a very, very substantial tax increase which the Treasurer failed to mention when he was presenting his budget to this Legislature on Tuesday afternoon.

There are a number of other tax increases, such as the personal income tax increase of one per cent, very much now being felt by the residents of the province of Ontario, and the \$5-per-tire tax, very much now being felt and paid by the residents of the province of Ontario. There are numerous others, but we are

talking about this year's budget. But the previous years' budgets, the 103 per cent increase in taxes that have occurred in the last five years, are now being paid by the residents of the province of Ontario.

I am critic for Agriculture and Food, and that is a ministry in which, although a lot of lipservice has been paid to it, very little financial action has occurred. Oh yes, we did have an interest rebate program that was in place in 1985, when interest rates were actually lower than they are right now. We are now facing the highest interest rates that we have since 1982, and those are factual figures.

However, it took the almost call of an election to have \$48 million injected into the Ministry of Agriculture and Food on interest rate reduction. I do not know on what they will base what should be the normal interest rate. Under the old plan, the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program, it was eight per cent. Right now, most farmers are paying 15.5 or 16 per cent, so it is an additional eight per cent; prime plus one, in the mid-teens, 15 to 16. Farmers cannot in any way, shape or form afford this kind of interest.

If, for example, an average farm has a \$50,000 mortgage and/or operating loan, that additional eight per cent is some \$4,000. If we look at the figures, we have about 75,000 active farms in the province of Ontario. If we take the \$48 million that the Treasurer allocated, it is slightly more than \$600 on average per farm. As the Treasurer mentioned yesterday, yes, some of our farmers probably do not have borrowed money and therefore they will not be collecting this \$600.

However, the \$600 is a far cry from the \$4,000 in the example I have just given members on a \$50,000 mortgage and/or operating loan that is now paying eight per cent above what the base figure was in 1985, 1986 and 1987 of eight per cent, and the OFFIRR program was oriented towards reducing the interest rate paid by farmers to eight per cent. So it is not a large amount of money.

You have to remember, Mr Speaker, that agriculture farming is a somewhat different type of endeavour. You buy retail and you sell wholesale, and not many businesses do that. Think about it. You buy retail and you sell wholesale. Commodity prices, beef, pork, grains, are somewhat at the levels they were about 10 years ago. As a matter of fact, I recall selling corn in 1980 at \$180 a ton, and right now you are lucky to get \$135 or \$136. That is doing well.

We are getting a little more in eastern Ontario. We are getting a little more because we happen to be situated a little bit farther away from some of the markets. We always like to think that in spite of the fact that we have somewhat less heat units, we have pretty good farmers in eastern Ontario and we can compete with some of the best anywhere at growing crops, producing livestock or whatever is involved in agriculture.

So it is a \$48-million amount for one year just to get the government over the election process and then we will be forgotten again, as a very important economic group of people here in this province. We are, as farmers, something less than three per cent of the total population. However, I think that primarily due to agriculture this province has always prospered and done well. We in the agricultural production end of things, given the market, can double if not triple our production. We could feed the world.

However, the limitations are there regarding economics. We are hoping and trying to do away with some of the very major subsidies and the Uruguay round of the GATT is attempting to solve some of those problems, not very successfully, I might add. However, they know the problem is there. It will take a lot

of political will to eliminate some of the high subsidies that are being provided to the European Community and others in the production of food.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food anticipated a \$579-million expenditure in the 1988-89 fiscal year and actually spent only \$522 million. Some \$51 million of that reduction was direct transfer payments to farmers, farmers out there who were faced with increasing costs, declining income and yet declining support from their provincial government.

In another example, some 14 agricultural engineers were chopped from the staff of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food without consultation, without asking anyone, simply chopped. We were told they were only working at 27 per cent efficiency. The agricultural engineer in my area was available, providing assistance in designing drainage projects, in soil conservation projects, in livestock accommodation, such as ventilation systems and what have you. These are services that now will probably have to be paid for by our agricultural community.

1600

Yes, we still have some agricultural engineers, but they will be very busy. They probably will not have the time to come out to the farm and look at the situation at first hand: "What is the problem? How can we resolve it?" This is something that our agricultural people had grown very fond of. They certainly accepted the fact that the agricultural engineer was there and would have been able to visit the farm in the near future at the request of the farmers. I am afraid most of that will be gone.

There are a number of other casualties, cuts from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, one of the very few ministries that suffers from cutbacks, in a time when the industry is going through some of its most difficult times, not only in the decade but in the century.

Certainly conservation is an important aspect. In the budget, \$48 million was announced for the land stewardship program, soil conservation. What the Treasurer forgot to tell us was that \$10 million of that money had already been spent; so that brings it down to \$38 million. It is spread over four years, going through until 1994, so it is about \$9.5 million a year for the land stewardship program. I am not sure just how dedicated this government is to supporting agriculture and the conservation of some of our very good soil that we have here in this province.

Another area is the farm tax rebate. The Treasurer did not touch on that one. About this time last year, he decided, I am told without even discussion with the then Minister of Agriculture and Food, that he would make the farm tax rebate a political animal instead of an equity lever to the agricultural community. Farm land and farm buildings are taxed for educational purposes, and that is certainly not a fair tax because, for educational purposes, land and buildings should not be part and parcel contributing to that particular tax burden.

Many years ago, after a great deal of persuasion from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the then government, the Tories, brought in the farm tax rebate program to bring equity to the administration and the operation of a farm, equity in that someone in the city owns a house, a house accommodates people and is therefore subject to education tax and is fair game. The same does not apply to farm land and farm buildings. That was simply a recognition that equity had to be brought to this particular area.

Lo and behold, this Treasurer has now turned it into a means test and a political beast, and I think that is terrible, because the Treasurer does know better, being a farmer himself and a very astute businessman also. But he chopped \$27 million

from that program because it was deemed to be too rich and then he applied a means test. That politicized the process completely, and now we are probably trying to orient farmers in the direction that the government wants them to go. The farmer and his wife are subject to a means test, to establish whether they qualify for the farm tax rebate program to bring equity to the payment of education, and it does not make any sense at all.

I understand at present there is a committee studying the new and rejuvenated farm tax rebate program. Will they listen? That is another story. What will become of it no one knows, but it was reduced from \$167 million and that should not even be part of the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. It was only a reimbursement to bring equity to the system, a reimbursement to the farmer, because in order to operate his business, he has to have farm land and farm buildings. All it was doing was reimbursing the educational portion of those taxes on the land and the buildings. Equity no longer applies with this particular government. It is a matter of politics and whatever direction the Treasurer and the Premier want to bring agriculture to.

In regard to auto insurance, I am also very concerned about our agricultural people. Bill 68, which is still under siege and debate in this Legislature, will simply look at the previous year's net income of a business person. It will be based on 80 per cent in the event of an injury that incapacitates the owner of a business to not only operate his business but probably do some of the manual labour.

The Minister of Financial Institutions has stated that he has amendments that will be changing this to some degree, and I gather there are some 30 amendments being brought forth. I am not sure what the amendments are, but as things now stand, \$185 a week is the minimum amount. I am sure we will have some new struggling businesses and young farmers who may not have a taxable income the previous year, having taken some very legitimate expenditures, and they will be faced with a \$185-a-week maximum amount, if indeed they had no net income or paid no income tax the previous year. That must be changed to a percentage of the gross income and, of course, we have a maximum of \$600 a week.

I hope some of the Liberal backbenchers, if not the Liberal cabinet ministers, appreciate and understand a beginning business, a struggling agricultural operation, where the farmer, his wife and his family all contribute free labour. Thank goodness for that or many of them would not be able to operate at all. So we have to look at Bill 68 for agriculture and for small business based on gross income and not net income, and always remember that there is a maximum there at \$600 a week. I defy anyone running a farming operation to replace himself as both the manager and the hired hand for \$185 a week. It is less than \$10,000 a year. It does not make sense at all.

I want to touch on supply management a little bit. Certainly that is the area of agriculture that shines the brightest. It is something that we have to protect. The federal government is moving rather quickly in that area in order to make sure our dairy and poultry producers do have support from the GATT.

The jury is still out on that one, but certainly the climate for doing business here in Ontario was depicted in a report of the Food Industry Advisory Committee. I will read just one short paragraph on page 1.

"A conducive business climate is required in Ontario. Industry's perception is that there has been a series of legislative initiatives imposing new costs. Cumulatively they make Ontario less attractive for long-term business investment."

This is a report that bears looking at. The government has constantly shirked its responsibility and the cost of many of its programs to municipalities, to industries, as in the employer health tax, to whoever happened to be handy and close by.

1610

Again, we saw it happen in this budget. It happened in that crown corporations are now being established to look after the assessment departments and also the water and sewer installation. It was interesting to read the comments by the mayor of the city of Ottawa, who saw this as a direct vehicle to charge municipalities and to also put the government at somewhat of an arm's-length distance from bad news.

We all know the market value assessment tempest here in the city of Toronto. Certainly we all tend to look with a degree of apprehension when we get our tax notice and we look at the assessment. You scratch your head and you say, "Is the property worth what someone else really thinks it is worth or is it worth less?" I certainly hope it is worth a little more when I come to sell it but, darn it, when I am paying taxes on it, I would like it to be worth just a little less; it would make the taxes a little more bearable.

But this government has put itself at arm's length from the assessment people by creating for them a crown corporation, a crown corporation that will inevitably, in the long run, be charging municipalities for doing the assessment of the properties they have within that municipality, and likewise for the Ministry of the Environment, in the installation of sewer and water systems, I think we are going to see again a mechanism in place to collect and to collect as best they can and the government will be at arm's length.

Again, it is a situation where the government has shirked some of its responsibilities and indeed created new vehicles that will kind of put the government itself in a slightly different area so that people will be taking aim at crown corporations, instruments of the government instead of the government itself when decisions are made in either the assessment area or the sewer and water area. It is kind of a handy little gimmick that was thought up by the Treasurer to distance himself from the problem.

Getting back to agriculture, many farmers were very disturbed when changes in pesticide regulations were announced earlier this year, and I see several of my colleagues in the Legislature who operate farms. Maybe they had reason to be a little concerned when the Ministry of the Environment changed the regulations on the way to handle herbicides and pesticides; they must now be secure. I have always put up my supplies in the back of my pickup truck, come home from the supplier, put them in the shed and use them when I need them. They now have to be secure.

Mr McGuigan: You have to lock it.

Mr Villeneuve: Absolutely. I am going to have to go with the car now and put them in the trunk on the way home. It is the only way I can lock them up. Either that or put them in the front seat with me as I drive home, and I think that is a bit ridiculous. I can tell you, Mr Speaker, it was sprung on farmers without consultation, without asking. They were told, "These are the rules." Do you know what it does, Mr Speaker? It makes us, the farmers, look like we are big, bad ogres, we are polluters, and the government is saying: "Look, we made them toe the line. We made them secure their herbicides and pesticides when they travel home."

When I am using herbicides in the field, will I have to have someone stand there with a gun trying to make sure that no one comes to my supply and somehow or other does something that is—

Mr Philip: The herbicides work better than the gun.

Mr Villeneuve: The herbicides work better than the gun? I hope so.

However, it just makes one wonder. We are putting agriculture through all sorts of gymnastics and actually leaving the impression that agriculture is a major culprit. I can tell you, Mr Speaker, that the farmers I know are probably the best conservationists of all. Lo and behold, our city people are just discovering composting; it is a big wonder—and it is; composting is great. However, farmers have done this for ever. That is another example of the shifting of burdens on to an industry, agriculture in particular, that really cannot afford the additional costs.

I have occasion regularly to visit one of the cheese plants in my area. It is known as the St-Albert Co-op. I did not ask a question of the minister during question period; however, I did send him a small note today to find out just what had happened with their appeal.

We have a very strange situation there, where this small cheese plant in eastern Ontario effectively markets all of the supply, all of the milk that it processes at the door in the same building where it is produced, and it has been cut on a number of occasions from the amount of milk it receives. They have appealed to the Farm Products Marketing Board and the board has decided it is not really in its jurisdiction to decide, so it is really in the minister's hands now. What we are looking at is simply providing them with enough raw product to meet the demand that their customers, via a 3,000-name petition, say they want and they like and they are going to continue to consume.

I am still looking towards the Minister of Agriculture and Food to be providing me with the decision that it is not undermining supply management; it is the last thing in this world. It is simply assisting to market processed dairy products, and our dairy farmers, who happen to be one of the more fortunate groups in the agricultural field today, are doing reasonably well under supply management. But they have also been faced with one, two and three per cent annual cutbacks in production, because we have a declining per capita consumption of dairy products.

This is one way of correcting to some degree that declining consumption per capita. This is a product that is wanted by the consumer and yet somehow or other bureaucracy is standing in the way. So it is in the minister's hands and I certainly hope he is able to come to a decision that will not only keep the processors happy, because they will be able to meet the demand, but also keep the consumers happy, because they travel from Ottawa, they travel from Cornwall, they travel from all over eastern Ontario, northern New York state and the province of Quebec to the little town of St-Albert to purchase their cheese curd and fresh cheese, which is, I guess, the moment in the sun or what this little cheese factory is best known for, its fresh curd and fresh cheese.

In summary, I was pleased to see a budget that did not spend more than it took in. However, in order to have that occur, there were some accounting gymnastics done, and that is fine. By and large, the same amount of money that is being taken in by the government is being spent, and it is called a balanced budget.

However, I am very concerned about the area of the province that I represent not having been mentioned once. Yes, the Premier is talking about a committee of cabinet to look after eastern Ontario. Right now, the minister cannot even reopen five closed-down St Lawrence parks, which would really effectively cost nothing and at least give municipalities and/or private individuals a chance at operating these parks another year. They did not have enough lead time this year.

So what would a committee of cabinet be able to do when the minister himself seems to be totally incapable of doing anything positive about reopening or making sure they do not close five of 15 St Lawrence Parks Commission parks? I do not know.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity of participating, and I can assure you that I will continue reminding this government that Ontario does not stop at Kingston and that we in southeastern Ontario must not be forgotten, as we have been totally in this most recent budget.

1620

Mrs Sullivan: I am very pleased to be able to participate in the debate on Ontario's 1990 budget. I believe that the presentation of this document will be seen as an historic occasion in our provincial government history.

The budget is certainly being greeted warmly in my constituency and I will speak more of the specific effect and response in Halton Centre latterly. As well, the budget is being welcomed throughout the province. I have noted even a measure of grudging respect from members of the other side of the House in relationship to this particular fiscal plan.

The 1990 budget is creative and it is innovative. It has been carefully crafted to combine fiscal responsibility with a commitment to social justice. It provides an indication of the firm resolve of this government to meet what is a clear priority of Ontarians in coming to terms with environmental matters. It provides incentives to encourage continuing economic strength. We know that economic prosperity is a spur to social development.

This is a Liberal budget in a framework of fiscal responsibility. It provides services and funding today while building for a better tomorrow in education, in transportation, in health care, in agriculture, and in ensuring an adequate infrastructure to cope with deteriorating, inadequate or non-existent facilities.

Everyone in Ontario, along with members of this House, will celebrate that for the second year in a row the budget is balanced. The last time two balanced budgets in a row were presented was in 1966 and 1967. You might be interested in knowing, Mr Speaker, that indeed that was when the Speaker of the House was first elected and when the member for Niagara South was first elected. The only other sitting member in this House who was a member of the House at that time is the current Treasurer.

I was thinking of those heady days. I took the opportunity to review the history of budgetary planning decisions in Ontario over the years. Until this Treasurer, over the past 40 years there have been only three balanced or surplus budgets: the two I have mentioned in 1966 and 1967 plus the budget of 1970, 20 years ago. The current Treasurer of Ontario has, in less than five years, balanced the budget twice. That is history in the making.

I said last year, when I was speaking on the 1989 budget, that I believed the current Treasurer would be acknowledged as the finest who has served this province in that capacity. The evidence of his stewardship is very clear, and no one could doubt that prediction today. I thought I would take a few mo-

ments to review the progress made by the Treasurer in charting the course of deficit reduction and to remind members of the sound management approach of this Treasurer and this government.

In 1986 the deficit stood at \$2.6 billion, which the Treasurer inherited from the previous government. In 1987, that shrank to \$2.5 billion. In 1988, the position improved by over \$1 billion to a \$1.5-billion deficit position. Last year the deficit fell a further \$1.5 billion to a modest surplus position, and that continues in 1990.

It is also interesting to compare Ontario's budgetary performance over a period of time with that of the federal government. As members know, the federal government was elected in 1984. In Ontario, the government changed hands in 1985. Each new government faced a growing annual deficit and substantially increased total debt. Each new government expressed publicly a commitment to eliminate annual deficits and reduce total debt. If members want to take a look at the position of the federal government today and the provincial government today, it is not too difficult to see which one has the management skills and which one keeps its promises.

Neither the Ontario nor the federal government has huge printing presses in the basement to produce vast new stocks of money to pay the bills. Both have used revenue moves to meet new service needs but Ontario, for two years in a row, has achieved a balanced budget. Ontario has also vastly increased services which are provided in exchange for taxpayer dollars, and Ontario today has a per capita deficit of zero dollars. The federal per capita deficit is close to \$1,200.

In a different context, someone made the apt comparison, "Some chicken, some egg." The Minister of National Revenue, Mr Jelinek, represents part of my constituency. He has recently distributed a circular complaining about Ontario's fiscal performance, but my constituents know where the egg is—covering his face and his eyes, and that is why he cannot see the positive fiscal and budgetary management that is included in this province.

For his benefit, I would like to underline again the positive trends in deficit reduction in Ontario and, indeed, in reducing the total debt for the first time in the last 20 years. I would like to commend that type of management to his colleague Mr Wilson.

The indicators of strong, balanced fiscal management are evident on the bottom line. The same trend lines, though, can be seen in the course of change in net cash requirements. In 1986, net financing requirements were \$2.2 billion and in 1990 we expect a net cash surplus of \$430 million.

Under the Treasurer's direction, the province's operating position has also strengthened. From minus \$400 million in 1985, the operating position moved to a surplus of \$3.3 billion last year. For 1990, the Treasurer is forecasting a surplus of \$3.2 billion. That surplus means that 100 per cent of our capital expenditures will be financed from current revenues. It also means that our day-to-day accounts are to be met from our revenue base.

The charts for every indicator tell the story of fiscal responsibility. We can see that Ontario's total debt will fall to \$38 billion in 1991. In 1985, the total debt measured as a share of the economy stood at 17.9 per cent. The 1990 budget plan calls for a decline to 13.5 per cent, the lowest level in 20 years. The number of months' revenue that would be required to repay the total debt has also declined from 15 months in 1985 to 10 1/2 months this year. Ontario's debt charges expressed as a percentage of revenue also continued to decline from 12.4 per cent in

1985 to 9.7 per cent in the current budget plan. Every indicator underlines a responsible approach to our spending today and the effect it will have on the next generation.

This fiscally responsible approach matters to my constituents and I know that along with me they applaud the conscientious efforts to keep our performance in control. Ensuring that the province operates in a fiscally responsible way has not meant that we jeopardized our social responsibility.

There is an element of fairness in this budget that goes hand in hand with fiscal responsibility, and that is important to all of us, because that means those who have not fully shared in the benefits of eight years of sustained economic growth in Ontario have a place and an entitlement to benefits from that prosperity.

My constituency of Halton Centre is one that is facing rapid change. Not long ago, agriculture was the mainstay of our economy and the change to a dynamic, ex-urban community has been swift. Day after day, new homes are occupied by new families with children. Like other growth areas around Metropolitan Toronto, the pressures on our schools, our transportation, our water and sewers, our waste management, recreational facilities and health care service have been significant. Those changes will continue.

In Halton, within 20 years we expect to see a population close to double what it is today, and there will be a changed demographic in our population mix. Our proportion of population over the age of 65 will more than double in that period of time. The number of people who will work in our own community rather than travelling elsewhere will also double. The number of school-aged children will be half again what it is today, and they will live in newly developed areas. As in other areas of the province, we expect to see an increase in the proportion of families headed by a single parent. We also expect to see a continuation of the trend of more and more women participating in the workforce, to the point where female participation rates will equal those of males.

1630

Changes will also be reflected in the makeup of our business and industrial community. I should tell the House that Halton is enthusiastic about being part of the greater Toronto area approach to dealing with growth and indeed has proven to be a leader in the development of a co-ordinated planning scenario. Our municipalities and school boards have joined together to look at what that demographic change will mean over the years and the impact it will have on our infrastructure needs. It is a community that believes in planning ahead.

And that approach is precisely the one that is being taken in this budget document, because this budget sets the course today for the needs of the future. It reflects an underlying theme that planning today will meet the needs and the burdens of tomorrow.

A lot of those burdens relate directly to people. The Treasurer has indicated that reforms in long-term care that this budget heralds will be the most significant change in the provision of health and social services since the introduction of medicare in the 1960s. I believe he is right.

I hope members will not mind if I reminisce for a moment or two. I well recall as a university student attending meetings, speaking at events and knocking on doors to garner support for a universal medical care program. I remember reasoning at the time, when Mr Pearson was faring less than unanimously with federal proposals, that a medicare system made not only social sense but common sense as well.

Since that time, we have had generations of people in Canada who have not known a Canada without knowing a Canada which recognizes a right to a high standard of health care for every person. Defining Canadianism today for all of us includes a recognition of medicare as part of our national fabric. But over the past 30 years our society has changed and our sociology has changed. Our population is aging and that brings with it new care demands.

We all know that there are deficiencies in the current system that must be corrected if we as a society expect to continue to provide social and health care with dignity. We know that many people receive inappropriate services, including premature institutionalization, because alternatives are not available. We know that people who have been providing in-home care have been leaving the agencies because they cannot afford to continue to stay at work. We know that there have been different funding mechanisms for different services. We know that delivery services at the local level are confusing to people and costly to administer.

We know that without the substantial change the Treasurer has introduced in this budget, things can only get worse because, like Halton, the entire province is entering a period of rapid demographic change with a significant aging of the population. Along with that come increases in the numbers of people with disabilities and of those who require special care. This budget commits \$52 million this fiscal year to initiate long-term care reform.

The program will include a one-stop agency that will simplify the process of identifying appropriate services that can be provided in the person's own home or that will assist in the really trying process of having someone admitted to a long-term facility. For the person affected, or for his family, this will be not only a convenience but a welcome relief from the confused system which people now face.

The people who provide homemaking services are caring and dedicated. They frequently provide the only contact with the outside world for the persons in whose homes they work, and there is no question that the work they do is vitally important. I have, in my own constituency, gone with them and seen them at work with people who are disabled, the elderly and those suffering from acute or chronic health problems.

Members will remember that last year the Treasurer provided \$88.8 million for people working in community agencies across the province, including visiting homemakers, to enhance their salaries. This year, he has again recognized the contribution of homemakers with an \$11-million commitment that will boost wages by a dollar an hour. There is no question that funding reform will be greeted with open arms in Halton and elsewhere.

That is just the beginning of long-term care reform. Over the next five years, we shall see \$410 million of new provincial funding injected into rationalizing and changing our long-term care approach. Along with a co-payment system, which we are familiar with from programs like Meals on Wheels, there will be some \$640 million available to fund new and revised services. I know that we are all going to be eager in this House to hear further details of these reforms from the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Long-term care is not the only place in the budget where people come first. Last year, the 1989 budget introduced social assistance reform. In the short time since that \$415-million commitment was made, we have been able to measure, or agencies have reported, substantial improvements in the lives of recipients of social assistance. Changes, including increased

benefits for children, improved shelter benefits and improved employment support programs, have had an effect and we expect to see more.

The commitment of the province is clear. In 1985, \$1.3 billion was spent on social assistance. Over five short years, including the 1989 SARC reforms, we shall see a trebling of provincial social assistance funding with this budget. In addition, the budget has brought forward a major initiative to assist low-income families with children or disabled dependents. By doubling the cost of the Ontario tax reduction program from \$44 million to \$88 million, 115,000 families, more than 600,000 people, will no longer pay provincial income tax.

In the budget, the Treasurer spoke of a single-parent family with two children who would currently pay Ontario provincial income tax if they had an income of \$14,000. Following the changes, provincial income tax would not have to be paid until their income was close to \$19,000. The opposition will say it is not enough, and we all wish it could be more, but that tax reduction program in total, with these enhancements, will cost \$900 million this year. People I talk to who will be eligible for the new benefits in the Ontario tax reduction program tell me they believe this is a generous move and a caring one. To them it will make a difference, and they have been quick to tell me they feel cause to rejoice.

Many of these people, and others, will also benefit from the government's commitment to affordable housing and to social housing. I want to put some housing facts on the table. This year, our housing budget will rise to \$666 million, a 25 per cent increase over last year's \$530 million, which was itself a \$110-million increase over the previous year, and that was a \$100-million increase over the year before. In 1986, \$200 million was allocated to housing programs; today that figure has jumped to close to \$700 million. We are producing more social housing units than any other province, indeed than all other provinces combined, and we are doing it unilaterally. We are getting the job done.

I want to remind members that the federal government, in its last budget, cut its commitment to social housing by 15 per cent. Of course, we feel the pinch of that decision in Ontario. Our response has been to recognize the need and to take action. If our federal counterparts have seen the need, they have done so through a glass darkly.

I spoke earlier of the rapid pace of change in my riding and of the extensive number of families with school-age children who are becoming part of our community. That growth is located where schools do not exist, and the pressure on existing facilities is enormous. I am not alone in saying thank you to the Treasurer for making a renewed \$300-million school capital commitment in this budget. There has probably never been a time nor a place where there has been such a continuing commitment to providing educational facilities as this government has shown.

1640

This announcement takes to \$1.5 billion the capital contribution of the province to school boards that has been announced since the 1988 budget. Since 1985 the province's commitments to school boards in Halton will mean that \$102-million worth of capital projects have or will come to the fore. With this new budget commitment, we in Halton expect consideration for our fair share of additional capital to meet our growing demands in the next phase of capital allocations.

We are also aware of the commitment to child care that is desperately needed because of our changing demographics. In

1960, 31 per cent of women were in the workforce. Today, in my constituency 60 per cent of women work outside of their homes. Usually the 25- to 34-year-old age group is regarded as a period of temporary retirement because of child-bearing and child-rearing. In reality, in today's world this age group has a participation rate in the labour force of 75 to 80 per cent, and that is expected to rise to 90 per cent in a very short period of time.

The government has recognized the need for the funding of child care in a very real way. In 1984, child care was funded in Ontario at a level of \$88 million. This year, we will spend close to \$400 million and, of that, close to \$300 million is 100 per cent provincial funding. Child care facilities will be included in our new schools, and this budget includes a \$10-million allocation for the operation of those centres. Those dollars are flowing despite a fiscal restraint at the federal level that not only fails to keep pace with inflation but also means that new or expanded Ontario child care would not be supported under the Canada assistance plan.

I want to echo the words of the honourable Minister of Community and Social Services, who recently sent a strongly worded letter to the Minister of National Health and Welfare, the Honourable Perrin Beatty. He said: "The effects of hunger and poverty are the same to everyone, regardless of whether one lives in Ontario or Newfoundland. The broken agreement"—relating to the Canada assistance plan—"is one that has served as a basis for the development of the country's social assistance programs. Partners who share common objectives simply do not arbitrarily and unilaterally break agreements."

Ontario is now supporting the British Columbia court challenge against the federal government's unilateral and unexpected actions. It is clear that we see child care as a priority. We are making strides in providing new spaces and in providing fee subsidies. To again quote the Minister of Community and Social Services from his announcement of today, "Ontario's commitment is firm and constant."

For a couple of minutes I would like to turn to some of the economic areas of the budget. I have indicated that growth pressures factor strongly in my constituency, and one of our clear concerns relates to waste management problems that accompany growth. In growth times, it is frequently more difficult to have compatible economic and physical development that melds with environmental concerns, and that is a matter of great importance in my riding.

In Halton and in Halton Centre we have gone through a lengthy, expensive and divisive time to identify a new landfill site location. We have the highest participation rate in the province in the blue box recycling program. Our regional council is exploring further expansions to that program, and people are eager to participate. We have a community commitment.

In the long run, a fully integrated waste management system will include the 4Rs: recycle, reduce, reuse and recover. It will require that there be public and private involvement both in participation and in paying the costs. I see as a particularly useful initiative the 60 per cent funding increase in waste management programs that is included in this budget.

I believe, as we discovered through our acid gas abatement programs, that there is an economic advantage to be had in appropriately designed, integrated waste management systems. The international experience shows that energy recovery must play a significant part in those, and in doing so contributes, through the life cycle, to economic benefit and to environmental support. I believe we must maximize the use of the full complement of technological advances and state-of-the-art integrated

system development that is available, not only here but elsewhere.

There is no reason to suspect that we cannot create entire new industries or expand existing ones in support of our waste management priorities, but as well, we must produce less garbage. By making waste producers responsible for the cost of dealing with that waste—along with a substantial increase in the public funding component—the budget provides a welcome stick. The carrot is a more effective use of products and materials, which reduces costs and has positive environmental impacts because there is less waste to deal with. That is a sound approach that is presented in the budget and it is in tune with the times.

The funding in waste management areas that is included in this budget underscores the commitment of the government to the environment. Just a year ago, the Minister of the Environment announced our waste abatement targets: to cut in half the amount of garbage going to landfills and incinerators by the year 2000 and an interim goal of diverting 25 per cent of the waste stream to reuse, recycling, reduction and recovery by 1992.

Just last February the minister announced that the private sector, through Ontario Multi-Material Recycling Inc., would commit \$45 million for new recycling initiatives. OMMRI includes six industry associations, and its financial contributions are key in efforts to expand and create new recycling programs, to find and develop new markets for recycled products and to upgrade or add recycling facilities. That public sector-private sector partnership, with the producers of the waste joining in the efforts to change the course of the waste stream and paying to do so, is a signal of good corporate citizenship and enlightened government policy.

That forward-looking approach is also being taken with the announcement of the new water and sewage corporation. In Halton, our sewage capacity will be reached in the early 1990s, and our mid-Halton plants are already operating at capacity. We also need new water facilities and we cannot do it alone. The water and sewage corporation, I believe, is a singular step in ensuring that we have the capability of providing new and rehabilitated facilities. Like Ontario Hydro, the agency would be empowered to borrow with a provincial guarantee to finance new and expanded facilities. Municipalities would be able, at their wish, to contract with the corporation to accelerate their water and sewage infrastructure construction.

I noted at the back of the budget one short line—I think it was on page 66—that described that the capital cost of providing drinking water and sewage services to a typical house in a small Ontario community ranges from \$27,000 to \$40,000. The costs are high, but this approach is practical and will have a far-reaching impact. We must guarantee a clean, safe supply of water. This initiative will help to do that.

Another recognition in the budget of the fragility of our environmental tolerance is a continuation and enhancement of the land stewardship program for the next four years. I have said that agriculture is a diminishing part of our economic mix in Halton, but it is still very much a force. The working farmers in my community tell me that the land stewardship program is one of the most popular programs of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and the active involvement of the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association has provided significant benefits in the delivery of the program. It is a wide-ranging effort to reduce soil erosion and soil compaction, to restore organic matter to the soil and to minimize the potential for

environmental contamination as a result of agricultural practices.

Conservation farming techniques are very much a part of the business of agriculture in Halton, and our land stewardship program takeup was high. I join with my farm constituents in celebrating a renewal of the program and expect that our agricultural community will make maximum use once again of the opportunity to be part of it.

1650

Trucking is also an important industry in my riding and a major cog in the distribution of products, not only from my riding but from elsewhere. Across the province, the industry is also a key player in our competitive footing, particularly as just-in-time delivery becomes the operational mode in industry. Ontario originates 14 billion interprovincial truck shipments each year; 70 per cent of the total freight, 90 per cent of the food consumed and 85 per cent of our consumer goods are moved by trucks in this province. Trucks carry 70 per cent of Ontario's exports to the United States and 75 per cent of our imports from the United States.

Our trucking industry has not been treated with equity vis-à-vis American-owned competitors because of the tax treatment under the different corporate tax regimes. The industry also faces adjustments because of deregulation and corporate choices that have been made as a result of the free trade agreement.

The Treasurer's action in applying a provincial corporate income tax to all foreign trucking firms that pick up and deliver freight in Ontario will have a significant effect on our Ontario-based industry. I am told that this kind of level playing field in the corporate income tax area, along with the Treasurer's initiative in requesting the federal government to renegotiate the Canada-US tax treaty, will assist in keeping the industry healthy and viable.

There are other measures in this budget that will also build on Ontario's competitive strengths. Ontario's businesses are now making investment decisions while facing pressures from the implementation of the free trade agreement and from the increased globalization of our markets.

The enhancement of the Ontario current cost adjustment, by doubling it from 15 per cent to 30 per cent, will encourage investment in manufacturing and processing equipment, including pollution control equipment, by reducing costs. The stimulation of new manufacturing investment is a key factor in ensuring the continuation of our competitive position. For industry in my area, this is a thoughtful and positive incentive.

This budget will go a long way to ensure that all of our assets in Ontario are maximized. I believe a budget is not a document that is put together in isolation. Before it is drafted, expertise and an analysis are solicited from a broad range of groups and organizations representing a wide spectrum of our Ontario community. The Treasurer has opened up the budget process by requesting the involvement of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, and that committee heard some 31 oral presentations before it made its report available to the Treasurer. Some 78 groups submitted budget briefs or met with the Treasurer and his staff as the budget was being prepared. I know that the internal analysis of the Treasurer and his officials is comprehensive, intensive and demanding.

It has been five years since this government took office. In the course of that we have seen the preparation and delivery of significant social policy changes, major environmental protection initiatives, the preparation of our industrial sector for the

next period of international competitiveness. We have seen massive new commitments in education, health care and social services. We have seen that in a context of steadily reducing deficits, two balanced budgets in a row and a substantial reduction in our total debt. There is no question that we have seen leadership, and there is no question as well that I will be supporting this budget when it is placed before the House at the end of the session.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Cureatz): If memory serves me correctly, questions and comments go first, before the honourable member for Etobicoke-Rexdale.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: The Treasurer had his opening budget and there are no question and comments, so we are now on rotation. All right. We have that resolved.

Mr Kormos: Can I make questions or comments, Mr Speaker?

An hon member: Go.

Mr Kormos: Brief ones. There was absolutely no mention by the last speaker of the relief that is being given to the auto insurance industry here in the province of Ontario by virtue of Bill 68. When members look at the elimination of the premium tax, there is \$95 million that is going to be scooped from taxpayers' pockets that the auto insurance industry should be liable for, but oh no, this government with its largess would rather have that money come from taxpayers than from a wealthy, powerful corporate industry. That is number one.

Number two: Most shocking, there was no mention whatsoever of the second bit of fine gouging that these Liberals have done with respect to Bill 68 and their regressive, reactionary, intolerable fiscal policies, and that is of course that they have relieved their good friends, the auto insurance industry, of responsibility for the some \$46 million worth of health care costs that OHIP is going to have to absorb. It is incredible that the Liberals, when they talk in their fluffy tones about this non-budget, would not mention those disastrous consequences of Bill 68.

Mr Speaker, the debate about the time allocation motion that the Liberals are trying to impose in the debate about Bill 68 is not over. It has gone on for 23 hours and 24 minutes now, and once these comments on the budget are over with, I still have the floor and we are going to finish the debate that we started back on 3 April about time allocation and about Bill 68. That is a promise. That is a promise that can be kept. That is a promise that will be kept. So to those good folks who have been watching, wondering what is going on, just stay tuned.

Mr J. B. Nixon: Mr Speaker, perhaps you could advise us at some point whether or not questions and comments are permitted on a budget, comments by any member, but if they are I will take the time to talk about this little squib of a man over here who tells us total garbage and trash and talks about an unrelated bill. This man is so disgusting in the way he puts forward what he says is true and I find it so repulsive to even be standing in the same House with him, that it is difficult to be here.

First of all, he talks about tax giveaways. This man has no proof to back it up. He has to put evidence before us. He has no truth, no accuracy, no evidence, nothing whatsoever to back up what he says. In fact, this man has no agenda at all. His mind has gone amok. We do not hear anything now but yelling and screaming from this man. He is beyond control. His caucus

cannot control him, his leader cannot control him and he is getting pathetic, beyond pathetic. It is getting embarrassing for the citizens of Ontario, never mind all of us in the Legislature here.

I say to you, Mr Speaker, that I am not sure how you can tolerate sitting there hearing all these conceptions of reality that seem to have been piped in from some nether world above and beyond the ozone. I am just not sure where they came from. I am just not sure what he is telling us, but we never have the opportunity to say, "Give us your facts." He will give opinions and phone calls and letters, but he does not have facts, he does not have an agenda and the whole party is falling apart because it does not have an agenda. They do not know where they want to go on this issue, as always.

The Acting Speaker: I do not know. We were having such a nice, pleasant Thursday afternoon. What happened? The honourable member for York Mills had indicated about clarification on questions and comments. As the table has so wisely advised me, the first speakers on the rotation will not have questions and comments on their deliberations. However, in rotation, the Treasurer had brought forward the budget. There were no questions and comments, but of course we were in discussion with the honourable member for Halton Centre on her opening remarks to the budget and that is why we are just participating now.

I can only advise the honourable member for Welland-Thorold that it has been with a great deal of interest that we have been listening to his concern from time to time, but I want to advise him that continued repetition, so that other members cannot be heard, will not be tolerated. I know the honourable member would not want me to name him and ask him to leave the chamber, would he?

1700

Mr Kormos: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I had attempted to indicate earlier—I had read somewhere, and I rose on a point of order when the member who just spoke did, that I was hoping the Speaker would rule him out of order on the grounds of being boring, but since then I have been advised that being boring does not constitute a violation of the rules of order so I withdraw that point of order.

The Acting Speaker: Continuing with questions and comments, are there any concluding remarks from the honourable member for Halton Centre?

Mrs Sullivan: Yes, just in response to the diatribe from the member for Welland-Thorold, I think the member should recognize that Ontario is in a singular position in North America. We have a highly trained labour force. We have a competitive corporate tax structure, corporate labour rates that compare favourably with other jurisdictions. We have been placing additional capital and additional incentives into research and development in association with our universities. We have been placing incentives to increase energy efficiency to affect the bottom line. We have been moving very clearly to take our industries and our businesses in all sectors into the next phase of development in a highly competitive global international market.

I think it is very clear that this gentleman does not understand the facts of life relating to the business world, nor how the business world must adjust and is being taken into that adjustment period over the next period of time.

Mr Philip: Since coming to power in 1985, revenues from personal income tax under this Liberal government have risen

100 per cent, while at the same time the people in this province have had their incomes rise only 50 per cent. Now what we have is a budget that says they are balancing the budget and are not raising taxes except for those who want to puff and smoke. But yet if we look at this budget, it has done nothing for housing and the word "housing" is not even mentioned in the budget.

Those responsible for health care in our hospitals say that it will not solve their problems, our problems, in the health care field. It does nothing to remove the tax discrimination against those living in the greater Metropolitan Toronto area. We had expected that there might be an attempt by this government, at least before an election, to lower the sales tax, since this was the government that raised the sales tax in the first place at a cost of \$400 more per family per year, but there was no mention of that.

It is a misleading budget. To talk about balancing the budget, when at the same time this government is more and more divesting itself of provincial responsibilities and passing them on to municipalities so that they have to pick up the costs and pass them on to the home owners and to the tenants through their property tax, is completely dishonest.

It is a misleading budget when we see that it is going to raise at least \$100 million in user fees by the middle of the decade from seniors who need services in order to remain in their own homes. This budget moves services from the Ministry of Health to the Ministry of Community and Social Services and it can only be seen for one purpose, to allow user fees, because user fees would be unacceptable to the people of Ontario if introduced by the Ministry of Health.

If one looks at this budget, too, one has to say, "How realistic is this budget?" It is based on the following assumptions. It is based on a projection of falling interest rates. That is a view that is not held by all economists who are looking at the province of Ontario or indeed at North America. It is based on a projection of falling oil prices and other energy prices, and that again is not a position that is generally taken by economists looking at what is happening in the industry. It is based on a projection of a decline in inflation to below five per cent, something else which is not accepted by a good many economists.

What we see is a government that has accepted that there will be a 10 per cent increase in unemployment, and yet it has no plans on how to cope with that, and indeed we see \$11 million going to worker training, in comparison to \$140 million given as giveaways to its corporate friends.

If you look at the budget then, I guess it is a budget that has to have on it the label of, "Don't worry, there'll be an election and six months down the road we can change our plans." The latest budget tabled by the Peterson Liberal government appears to be little more than another attempt by the majority government to buy votes at the expense of those of us who live in the greater Toronto area. It does nothing to remove the millions of dollars of extra taxes imposed on Metro-area residents but not on others living in other parts of this province.

I have talked at some length in this House, and indeed introduced petitions, about the corporate concentration tax of greater Toronto imposed by the Liberal government, the first government in all the history of this province or indeed of Canada that has said that if you live in a particular geographical area or if you operate a business in a particular geographical area, we, as the central government, are going to charge you higher taxes than if you happen to live or operate your business in another area.

So we have carried into this year's budget from last year's budget what some of their own ministers in private conversations admit are unfair measures. We know that the hotels have stopped all capital construction in the greater Toronto area. There is not one hotel in my riding, and there are dozens of hotels in the airport strip, that has not cancelled its plans for future construction, that is not planning layoffs, that does not see a major reduction in conventions as a result of the increase of some \$4 to \$6 per night per room caused by this Liberal government.

I have introduced petitions that deal with other obvious inequities against the people of Metropolitan Toronto. The people resent the fact that they are paying higher for their licence plates than the person in St Catharines. They see that as basically unfair. On top of that, while this government now in this budget offers an increase of 11.3 per cent in transfer payments to Ontario municipalities to pay for social programs and other programs, Metro will only get an increase of 4.8 per cent. This is at a time when inflation is running at 6.3 per cent.

It is clear that the Premier and the Treasurer do not like us in Metropolitan Toronto, or they feel that they can take us for granted. What is so sad is that the Liberal Metro members have said absolutely nothing about the economic apartheid of Ontario, of being discriminated against, not because you have a higher income, not because your business is showing profits, but because you happen to operate your business or you live in the greater Toronto area.

The Liberal government's latest budget, while they talk about a balanced budget, means higher property taxes for people in both Metro Toronto and in other areas. For the home owner, we see that the unconditional grants have increased by only 4.8 per cent in two years, frozen last year as they were, and taking into account the growth of population and inflation, unconditional grants have declined by 10 per cent in real dollars over the last two years.

Road grants were frozen in 1988-89, so the increase over two years is 10.9 per cent, while inflation will increase in the same period by 11.5 per cent. Thus, in terms of real dollars, in terms of inflation, the road grants are still falling behind inflation.

1710

Other transfers for environment, health and social services are above inflation, but these programs are being paid for in part by the municipal tax base, anywhere from 20 to 50 per cent, so local governments are forced to increase their regressive property taxes in order to pay for these provincial initiatives.

What the province should be announcing is new transfers to the municipalities, which cover 100 per cent of the expenditures involved in the programs which they are initiating. Instead, what we are faced with by this budget and by previous Liberal budgets are unfair municipal tax bills affecting both home owners and tenants. This will give more rise to inflation because of other recent provincially mandated programs such as the employer health levy, pay equity and the transferring of financial responsibilities, such as the court security, to the lower levels of government.

The Treasurer has done nothing to alleviate this increase in the financial burden on municipal governments and their property tax payers. So while this government likes to play a shell game of saying that it has a balanced budget and that it is not increasing taxes, it in fact is increasing taxes, it is just increasing them at the municipal level rather than provincially.

I guess the most astonishing thing about this budget is this government's failure to respond to the need for housing. The government fails in this budget to even use the word "housing" once. It fails to announce any new housing programs.

Maybe the government thinks that it has solved the housing problems in Ontario, but in fact statistics reveal otherwise. Over 200,000 households are caught in the cycle of homelessness; over 41,000 households, representing at least 71,000 people, are on the waiting list for assisted housing in this province; an apartment vacancy rate for Ontario of 0.8 per cent, or eight apartments for rent for every 1,000; a vacancy rate in my area of Metropolitan Toronto of 0.3 per cent. One third of Ontario tenant households pay over 30 per cent of their income for rent, and this will likely increase as more tenants are hit with large rent hikes because of the Liberal government's rent review system and because of property taxes increasing, thanks to this Liberal government's budget. From 1985 to 1989 the average house price increased in Ontario by 114 per cent, from \$86,000 to \$184,000, making home ownership beyond the reach of many families, and yet this government has no new initiatives to help people presently renting to get into home ownership. For 1990 there will be less than 5,000 new non-profit and co-op housing allocations from the federal and provincial programs.

The province has not announced a new housing supply program since the spring of 1988. The allocations of 30,000 units from the Homes Now program for 1988 are all used up and the Treasurer ignored the recommendation of our Legislature's own standing committee on finance and economic affairs to introduce a follow-up program to the Homes Now program. There is still no introduction of a property speculation tax, which our party has called for for years and which is in fact imposed in many countries as a way of stopping speculation in an essential commodity. The government should again become active in land banking as part of a long-term approach to the provision of affordable housing, but it fails to do so. In the first four fiscal years of Liberal rule, the Ministry of Housing budget was unspent by \$135 million. One has to ask, how can anyone take this government seriously when it talks about housing?

Then, of course, we have the serious problem of the rooming house problems, unsafe conditions and just deplorable living conditions, which this government is not dealing with. It was the topic of not only public outcry in this House but also of a study by the standing committee on public accounts.

When we look at the environment, we still see that this is basically an ungreen province. There are no green taxes, even though so many groups recommended this. There should be a tax on excess, non-recyclable, non-returnable packaging as a way of dissuading industry from using environmentally unfriendly products. There are no incentives for companies that are moving towards environmentally friendly products.

There is no change in emphasis regarding the solving of the garbage crisis. It is still landfill and incineration, which the Minister of the Environment in 1985 said was a completely objectionable solution to the garbage problem. Basically we are talking about recycling all the way, whether or not there is a market for it or a strategy to deal with the recycled products once those products are collected for recycling.

There is no mention of sorely needed increased dollars for an environmental contingency fund to clean up abandoned and toxic waste sites such as the Smithville PCB site or of a super-fund funded by taxes on companies which manufacture toxic chemicals. Where is the Minister of the Environment who said the polluter must pay? Where is he in this budget?

There is no announcement of badly needed increased funding for the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program or the clean air program. The former is certainly badly behind schedule and the latter barely off the ground and there is terrible staff overwork and burn out in spite of the various grand pronouncements and announcements over and over again by the Minister of the Environment.

The sewer and waste crown corporation is really a terrifying move that is being certainly criticized by the environmentalists and people who are concerned about our environment. In spite of the Treasurer's protestations to the contrary, a government's own source quoted in the *Toronto Star* on 23 April calls this proposal "the biggest setback for the environment that Ontario has seen in five years." It is the biggest Liberal enviroidisaster yet—macro, as my colleague the member for Windsor-Riverside called it.

There is no reason why a pro-development ministry like the Ministry of Municipal Affairs should have the responsibility for this crown corporation. Why was the Ministry of the Environment good enough for the Liberals in the 1987 election campaign when the sewer infrastructure renewal program, LifeLines, was announced. It is not good enough now. I guess it has to be the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the developers who are going to make what are environmental decisions.

On waste management, there is no indication of how the government will achieve the Minister of the Environment's goal of 25 per cent diversion of garbage from disposal by 1992 or 50 per cent by the year 2000. The money will go largely to recycling, and the word "incineration" recurs over and over again in the last few weeks, a word which the minister could hardly use without spitting in 1985. So we are back again as the 4Rs instead of the 3Rs: Reduce, reuse, recycle, recover and incinerate.

If we look at the situation of the poor, we see that this government also has not responded. Effective 1 January 1991, there will be a five per cent increase in the basic benefits of the shelter allowance ceilings, but this budget will make no difference to the people who use food banks and indeed the minister has announced the cancelling of the food bank subsidies. In my riding, the food bank is closing because this government refuses to fund it any further.

Indeed, by setting the 1 January 1991 increase rate now, before the impact of the 1990 inflation and the federal goods and services tax are realized, the poor may well be worse off in 1991 than they are now. The government's own predictions put inflation at 4.9 per cent with the GST adding 3.2 per cent, which gives a total of 8.1 per cent. Thus the poor will be worse off by the government's own projections.

Between January 1989 and January 1990, there has been a 6.2 per cent increase in the number of social assistance cases, particularly in the family benefits category. Rising numbers of persons depending on social assistance will account for increases in the overall budget in 1990.

1720

Without an increase in the minimum wage, which this government is refusing to put in place, and without an increase in the amount of affordable housing, very large numbers of the poor now relying on food banks will continue to be in a desperate situation. With only small increases in training budgets for displacement of workers, the workers who are going to be displaced by the government's own admission of an increase in unemployment are similarly going to be affected, and those on social assistance will be in a worse situation than they are now. There is no increase for the single unemployed

and disabled persons who are not assisted by the 1989 children's benefit increase, so the unemployed and the disabled are similarly in worse shape as a result of this budget than they were before.

What we have is a budget that lacks any kind of vision. It boasts about balancing a budget, but it balances at the cost of the poor, the home owners, the property taxpayers and the municipalities. It is not a pre-recession budget, even though the government's own figures are indicating that we are on the verge of a recession, and indeed figures by a number of economists would suggest that. It is not designed to deal with the real economic challenges of this province. It does not really ask the question, what is the amount of the revenue that we need and what are the sources from which we can obtain that revenue without hurting more and more middle-income earners and poor people?

In that sense, I think the headlines, the editorials and the comments by the various groups during the last couple of days have been very significant. The Treasurer had hoped that this would be an election budget, that it would make everybody sigh with relief that a government that has increased taxes so dramatically during good times was now going to ease up during bad times. But the taxpayers, the people of this province, will see through this. It is a shell game. They are merely passing on the cost to municipalities, to user fees and to other ways of robbing our pockets.

We have a government that only in the last few months has managed to transfer from the pockets of ordinary citizens, from our pockets, close to \$1 billion to the pockets of the insurance companies. We have now a government that introduces a budget that transfers taxes from the pockets of the provincial taxpayer to the pockets of the municipal taxpayer. The only problem is it is the same citizen who is paying the bill, it is the same citizen who is being robbed, it is the same middle-income earner who is being attacked by this government.

I think the people of Ontario will understand what this government is doing to them. I think they will understand exactly what is happening. I would be happy to have an election called on this budget. I think I can sell the fact that a majority Liberal government budget is a high-tax budget, a budget that taxes the middle-income earners, that lets off the large corporate and rich friends of the Liberal government. It is not a budget that they can successfully sell to the public of Ontario, and I invite them to try to do so.

Mr Matrundola: It gives me great pleasure to rise on this wonderful warm afternoon, this spring day, and speak about the government's budget. Like the spring day outside, it is a wonderful, warm budget: wonderful that for the second consecutive year the people of Ontario have a balanced budget and warm for the compassion our great Treasurer has shown for the people of Ontario.

I am very proud and pleased to be able to rise in this House today and address the Ontario budget presented in this same House only two days ago. I am proud because I am reminded daily of the honour I have serving the people of my riding of Willowdale. I am pleased because I have an opportunity, given to me by the residents of Willowdale, to assist in the process we have in this great province of Ontario and indeed in this great country, Canada, a process of representative government, one which gives them a better, fairer life. I am particularly proud and pleased because I believe the residents of Willowdale will see the budget and realize how well served they are by the provisions given in it for all Ontarians.

This budget shows a sense of responsibility, that our government is responsible and has a sense of direction. Yes, while in the last two budgets there were significant measures to ensure fiscal responsibility, the money was not wasted. It has been spent wisely and usefully, and not only is this the second year that we have a balanced budget, we also have a surplus. We have shaved off \$430 million from the huge, \$38.8-billion deficit that was so greatly accumulated by our predecessors.

We have regained the sense of direction and responsibility, and the people of Ontario know that. When governments lose their sense of direction and responsibility, it is dreadful. That is why they fall. Indeed, do members know why the Roman Empire fell? It fell because the people, the people in the government, the ones who were actually running it, had lost their sense of direction and responsibility. The public sees that, and on Judgement Day they will act accordingly.

This budget is about challenge, and the Concise Oxford Dictionary has one definition of "challenge" as "calling to respond." Certainly, the residents of Willowdale have seen the times we are in, the difficulties we are all facing and called upon this government to respond. It is a challenge to give to the people of this great province the services they are entitled to without unfairly taxing them to do it. This government has met that challenge.

Ontarians always have wanted and always have deserved a healthy economy, and the best sign of a truly healthy economy is a balanced budget. Yet this is something which was denied to the people of Ontario until this government took office. Perhaps it was too much of a challenge. Now, not only is our current spending balanced, but this province is in an excellent position to meet the future challenges we will face.

Another challenge, the reduction of our provincial debt, has been met for the first time in 43 years. This is a sign to investors that our province is stronger now than ever before. Perhaps best of all, this balancing act, which was apparently quite a challenge because previous governments were unable to do it, has been done without any general tax increase; not only no tax increase, but the 1990 budget includes tax reductions for the truly needful low-income earners.

As everyone knows, we have entered a new decade. People are just not happy with the status quo any more. The challenge of the 1990s is to accommodate our population in an intelligent, fiscally responsible manner. Our government has met that challenge.

1730

Interjections.

Mr Matrundola: Excuse me, gentlemen. Would you like to go talk somewhere else?

For one thing, our population is an aging population. This is something which is very close to me. I had the pleasure to present a resolution in this House on 18 May 1989. My resolution sought to "establish a framework to allow for the relatives of frail elderly, chronically ill and disabled persons to care for them at home, where mutually agreeable and medically possible, by compensating the care giver at the same rate as qualified homemakers." Unfortunately, at that time it was not possible to get a broad enough consensus to pass the resolution.

However, even though my resolution has not been fully accommodated even now, this budget shows that our government is sensible and responsible enough to respond to the needs of the people and is, at least in part, addressing home care. More work is needed on this subject and I will keep working until the ultimate goal is achieved.

Our Treasurer has introduced what is, in his own words, "one of the most significant improvements to health and social services since the introduction of medicare." The challenge here is to adequately care for ourselves as we grow older and are less and less able to do so. This government has committed \$52 million in funding over the next year to benefit elderly and disabled persons. This funding will be directed towards reforming the current system, jointly by the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Health. Perhaps best of all, the strategy is a reform towards community-based services.

I am sure the citizens of Willowdale, and indeed of the whole province, are gratified to see that this government is showing it has a strong commitment to care for both our elderly and our disabled by working to establish new community-based, in-home services or placement in a residential care facility. This means less need for institutions, already overburdened, and more use of the expertise available in our own communities.

As I said in the House before, it is often far better to be cared for in a familiar environment by someone that you know and trust, and at the same time that allows people to live in their own environment, with the care and dignity they deserve. Immediate relief is being provided for the wages of visiting care givers, to help improve the consistency and quality of services; \$11 million is targeted towards these people who help our elderly receive necessary care without having to be put into institutions. I know all the people across the province will recognize the importance of home care givers and their contribution to our aging population.

Another specific challenge facing this government, as it has other governments, is how to fairly raise adequate revenues, but to raise them from sources most able to pay. For sources least able to pay, relief is necessary.

The Ontario government is providing tax relief for low-income working families who have children or dependants with disabilities. This measure is designed to encourage these workers to remain in the workplace.

Families with dependant children 18 years or younger will be able to claim a \$200 supplement. The same amount of supplement will be provided for dependants with disabilities, regardless of age. If there is a child with a disability, the total of these supplements will be \$400.

I said before that these are very nice and warm days, getting quite hot.

This government is responding to the challenge of creating a fairer system of taxation. I am sure that the residents of Ontario, like the people in my riding, will be glad to see this response to the tax challenge.

Yet another challenge is the aging of our city infrastructure. The Ontario government has responded with assistance to municipalities in the form of \$175 million in grants and \$71 million in loans for the next year.

But that is only the beginning. New and rehabilitated facilities are needed for the increasing demand placed upon our water and sewer systems. For this the government, through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, is setting up a new crown corporation to build and operate the water and sewer facilities. Working along with the municipalities and the private sector, we must ensure a good supply of clean and safe water in Ontario. This new corporation will assume responsibility for those facilities which the Ministry of the Environment is currently looking after.

A city such as North York, in my riding of Willowdale, is a city which needs provincial assistance with its infrastructure

responsibilities. I believe these steps by the Ontario government are vital and needed and will be welcome by both municipal officials and residents in my riding as well as by all people across Ontario, and this is another challenge we have met.

Challenges to this province's budget are never-ending. I do not envy the task of our provincial Treasurer. His commitment to the people is particularly worth noting in this time of federal cutbacks. Despite these ruthless cutbacks, especially in provincial transfer payments, our Treasurer has brought forth his second balanced budget, which actually increases Ontario transfer payments to municipalities without increasing general taxes. An 11.3 per cent increase over last year in payments to cities and towns of Ontario will be especially welcome. These transfer payments will include \$90 million in social programs alone, programs which provide assistance for visiting care givers, for example, as I have mentioned.

Included in this \$90 million in social assistance are homes for the aged, child welfare, child care and other social services. In all, \$164 million will be shared with municipalities across Ontario. The residents of North York in my riding can only benefit from this increase in provincial government commitment. This government is backed by dollars and these dollars show that our government is meeting these challenges head on.

1740

Mr Speaker, as I am sure you know, a great number of the working population in my riding of Willowdale are commuters. Many rely upon both municipal and provincial transit services, including GO Transit. The \$400-million commitment from last year and over the next five years for service improvements will be welcome. The challenge here is to provide the most cost-efficient means of public transit. The extension of GO Transit rail service announced in this year's budget, in addition to the service improvements, is a big step towards the challenge of moving so many people in a very efficient manner.

Of special note, in my riding are the proposed improvements to the Old Cummer station at Finch and Leslie. There are several GO Transit lines which this government is improving, but the one to Richmond Hill, which passes through the riding of Willowdale, is the one that really affects the residents in my riding.

Perhaps I might offer a suggestion here while I am addressing the topic of transportation in this budget. There is a commitment to the Sheppard subway proposal, which may be brought back this fall. The Sheppard subway line is very important and I fully support it. Consideration must be given in this context to taking the already approved extension of the Wilson line north of Sheppard and running a line which could extend up to Steeles Avenue through York University, with a stop at York University for the students so they can use public transit. Then running the same line along Steeles Avenue east to Yonge Street and down to loop at the present terminus at Finch at the same time could leave facilities for extending the subway at Yonge and Steeles east on Steeles Avenue.

In this manner, we can service a lot more people. Steeles Avenue is the boundary which separates the Metro region and York region. We will be servicing North York as well as Vaughan and Markham in that manner. We are not disrupting the environment. We are not disrupting any parks, because it could run along Steeles Avenue.

The Sheppard subway is very important, but so is also a line along Steeles Avenue looping at the Yonge Street subway.

I would ask the people studying this proposal to consider my suggestion, because I believe it makes sense. I lived in

Willowdale for 27 years. I have seen the area growing, and I believe I am qualified to make this suggestion.

I also must note that our provincial Treasurer made a call for a constructive approach towards better federal-provincial fiscal relations. I cannot agree more.

Our Treasurer has a difficult challenge which he should not have had. It was necessary to provide for the citizens of this province with less money than Ontario had come to expect from federal transfer payments. True, we were told by the Mulroney government that these payments would be reduced; however, it is like telling your brother that you will regularly be giving him some money you have collected for him, then, after a while, when he has gotten used to the payments, you will tell him you are awfully sorry but you will need more of that money for yourself, henceforth giving him less. Wilson's budget included our payments based upon good faith. Now he has cut it short.

The federal transfer payments to the provinces are a long-standing agreement which was worked out by both parties. They represent a commitment by the federal government to assist the provinces in matters of shared responsibility. Unilateral action where agreement was made by both parties prior is not an accepted way of fostering the Canadian partnership.

I am deeply heartened that our Treasurer is continuing to ensure that Ontario meets its obligations to its citizens. Our Treasurer had this challenge facing him. It was unfortunate, but he faced it squarely. This particular challenge echos my recent statement in this House regarding the need for the federal government to intervene and reduce the high interest rates being set by the Bank of Canada.

The people in my riding speak to me about these rates. These high interest rates strongly hamper their ability to make the progress they are working so hard for. The idea of reducing the inflation rate by raising interest rates is insane, because the net result is the inability of the population to reasonably achieve its goals—purchasing homes, cars etc—while the government pursues its impossible dream in Ottawa.

An hon member: Fire Crow.

Mr Matrondola: Yes, fire Crow. The member said it.

Many people who need to renew their mortgages cannot afford it and they risk losing their houses. It is an investment that they made for life. It is a roof over their heads. It is something that they need and that we all need.

Mr Mulroney, Mr Wilson and Mr Crow want people on the breadline, and we should give them, in turn, some of their own medicine so that they will understand what it is like paying up to 18 per cent, or maybe more now, interest rates with the responsibility, at the same time, of feeding and clothing children.

I want to state in this House my continued commitment to the residents of Willowdale and my support, therefore, of the Ontario Treasurer's belief that constructive solutions to federal-provincial differences are possible and, may I add, very necessary. If just these two matters, the interest rates and the provincial transfer payments, could be worked out, there would be some breathing room for the people who are struggling to make ends meet—people like the hard workers who I have the pleasure to represent in Willowdale, the business people and the professional people in my riding. For them, we have good news in the doubling of the incentives for manufacturers.

Surely helping these companies stay in our province and in our country and assisting them to continue to expand is the best thing that we can do to spread the message to investors that our

economy is healthy and thriving and our workforce can absorb growth for their investment.

The 1990 Ontario budget tabled in this House this week goes a long way towards easing the pains facing new home owners, borrowers, etc, but this province cannot apply the balm alone. That challenge is facing others. The people of my riding have sought a budget like the provincial one tabled on 24 April. They are still looking for the federal compassion that our provincial Treasurer has shown.

On motion by Mr Matrundola, the debate was adjourned.

Mr Ward moved, pursuant to standing order 9(c), that the House not adjourn at six o'clock.

1750

Hon Mr Ward: The member has moved the adjournment of the debate, and I know that the next speaker will probably want a lot of time.

Motion agreed to.

TIME ALLOCATION (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on government notice of motion 30 on time allocation in relation to Bill 68, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance.

The Acting Speaker: As I recall, the honourable member for Welland-Thorold had the floor.

Mr Kormos: The only thing I feel badly about is that the phone lines here at Queen's Park are going to be shut down. I suppose the contraire of that is true, because at some point the message will get through anyway. So unfortunately those folks who thought they were going to watch the budget debate this afternoon are now watching a resumption of our debate on time allocation.

I brought down some of my material that I was going to talk about when it comes to time allocation. I know some members will want to be on their way. I merely remind the Liberals they are going to need at least 19 to maintain a quorum. Those 19 are going to be here to keep the quorum. They should not make any dinner plans.

What was remarkable just the other day was the commencement of a new contest. The real pressure was the pressure that was put on the Liberals to produce a piece of legislation that was going to satisfy the greed and avarice of the auto insurance industry here in Ontario, an industry that had proven itself some time ago to be less than considerate when it came to the interests or welfare of drivers, innocent injured victims and, sadly, taxpayers as well.

What happened the other day, as you might recall, Mr Speaker, was that we told the people listening—and they were interested because they were phoning in, using the telephones, using access to this forum to express their significant disapproval of the Liberals, of the tactics of the Liberal Party and of the refusal of the Liberal Party to participate in a debate—what happened was that people recognized that all we need is 29 members of the Liberal Party to vote against Bill 68 and that would make Bill 68 a bit of history, defeated, as it should be.

What happened across Ontario was that people, many of whom had been long-time Liberal supporters, recognized that the Liberal Party was deserting some traditional values that it had itself. These people became very frustrated, very angry, very disgruntled. In fact, what happened was that we started getting messages from across Ontario, from these very same

Liberals, people like Herman Turkstra in Hamilton, who indicated he had had enough. He was not going to put up in silence with a Liberal Party that has abandoned its ideals, has abandoned what Mr Turkstra as a Liberal member in Hamilton saw as a commitment to the community, a commitment to the province. What happened is that people like Mr Turkstra have begun expressing their strong disapproval, their condemnation of their own party. That is a painful process, as members can well imagine.

Mr Mackenzie: Mr Speaker, I do not think I see a quorum in the House.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1758

The Acting Speaker: I have been advised that a quorum is present. At this time I would like to continue to recognize the honourable member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, I hope you continue to recognize me for a long time. I mean not just here, but on the streets of various towns and cities across Ontario.

Mr B. Rae: Don't bother coming over here again, my friend. Don't ever come over here again. I have seen a lot of rat fink things in my life. A bunch of skunks.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: What has happened is that Liberals across Ontario have become thoroughly disenchanted with this government, with their own party. Things like this: What I have here is a cut-up Liberal membership card from an ex-Liberal in Barrie. Here is a Liberal who was not just a Liberal supporter, but a Liberal who was a member of the Liberal Party of Ontario. He was so thoroughly disgusted and disenchanted with his own party that he cuts up his membership card as a symbol of his disdain, not just for his government but for his own party, a party for which he had worked, a party to which he had made contributions, not just financial contributions but a party and candidates for whom he tramped the streets, a party for which he took great pains on an annual and monthly basis to campaign for its candidates.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Mr B. Rae: You have a House leader who lies to other House leaders in a discussion. He lies direct. He lied directly to our House leader. Don't give me that stuff.

Mr Mackenzie: You believe in lies.

Mr B. Rae: Keep lying.

Hon Mr Ward: You know better than that.

Mr Mackenzie: You believe in a liar and that is exactly what you got.

Mr Polsinelli: Three deals you guys made and you didn't live up to them.

Mr Mackenzie: We didn't do the lying.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. It has been brought to my attention that under the standing orders we have not had the opportunity of allowing the honourable member for Welland-Thorold to continue. Now it is with a great deal of hesitation that I bring to the attention of the honourable leader of the

official opposition that the Chair had clearly heard that he indicated to the government House leader that he had lied. Of course, under our standing orders, I know that the honourable Leader of the Opposition would reconsider, and I would ask him to withdraw.

Mr B. Rae: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: It is with further great hesitation that I heard the member for Hamilton East indicate that the honourable government House leader had lied.

Mr Mackenzie: It is my understanding, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: I take it then you will not be in a position to withdraw your statement.

Mr Mackenzie: When I feel that he has lied, I am not going to withdraw my statement.

The Acting Speaker: I would like only to comment to the honourable member for Hamilton East, for whom I have had nothing but a great deal of respect—I can think of times in this chair when the honourable member had displayed a certain Santa Claus outfit—would he not consider retracting his statement?

Mr Mackenzie: It just makes myself a liar, but I will withdraw the statement.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for Hamilton East.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, I am going to tell you what this ex-Liberal from Barrie had to say in his letter, a letter dated 23 April 1990. What happened is, he sent it down by Purolator—not Purolator, a quasi-Purolator; he sent it down by Vita Express. It is a 24-hour emergency courier service operating out of Lisle, and I have got to confess I have never been to Lisle in my life.

Do you know what, Mr Speaker? Some day I am going to go to Lisle, Ontario, because I bet you the people in Lisle, Ontario, know that what is right is right and what is wrong is wrong. I bet you the people in Lisle, Ontario, know that you do not sell out the people of Ontario for the interests of wealthy, profitable automobile insurance companies and their profits.

It is funny, in the sense of being peculiar, because when I talk about this cut-up Liberal membership card that I got by Purolator—we received it on the morning of the 24th—the minute I mention that, of course, I get a whole lot of squealing from the Liberal benches. Listen, Mr Speaker. Do you hear the squealing and the raucous moaning and groaning from the Liberals? This is exactly what we have been talking about for a whole chunk of time, and I can say this: I guess I should take some solace, some comfort in that, because what it means is that we are getting close to a nerve. We are touching a nerve.

Let me tell members what this gentleman from Barrie had to say in his letter to me. He writes, “Dear Mr Kormos, I called your office last week and explained my views on Bill 68 to your secretary, and in return you voiced my concerns in Parliament.” In some ways what is to follow in this letter may seem like a repeat of thousands of other Ontarians’ concerns. But obviously the Liberal members across Ontario and the Liberal members sitting here in this Legislature cannot understand when something is said but once.

This gentleman writes that he has supported the Liberal Party since he was 16 years old and was a member both provincially and federally. He says he is a proud Canadian, a very proud Canadian, albeit trying of late to maintain this particular frame of mind.

He writes that he is a working man. He works hard in a factory in Barrie manufacturing industrial filter cloth, to earn a salary of just over \$30,000, and his wife is a bank teller and she earns a moderate income. “I was not complaining,” he says. He says he is by no means complaining. He is proud of what he does and he is happy with his financial situation.

He writes, “But, sir, I am also 20 years old and my wife and I are just beginning a new life together.” He writes that they are responsible, mature young adults. There is nothing whatsoever that would permit anybody to say otherwise. He writes they pay their bills; they drive responsibly; they have clean driving records. They also pay their insurance company on time and in full.

You know people like this, do you not, Mr Speaker? You know people like this all over Ontario. You know people like this from big cities, small towns, rural areas. These are the sort of people who you know well.

This gentleman would like to ask the Liberal Party if it realizes that for a 20-year-old couple to insure two family cars—and he writes his is a Pontiac 6000—the insurance premium is just over \$3,000 for a one-year period. Under this new—and he does not call it Bill 68, he calls it “scam 68.” Scam 68 is what this gentleman calls the insurance legislation, and rightly so. Scam legislation, because it is a scam.

What would you rather I called it, Mr Speaker, than what it is? You would not want me to distort the truth, would you, Mr Speaker? You would not want me to be less than honest. I know you would not want me to be less than honest. I know you would not want me to not call it the way I see it.

You know what, Mr Speaker? This gentleman from Barrie calls it a scam. And you know what else, Mr Speaker? The gentleman from Barrie is right. It is a scam, pure and simple. It is a scam.

I tell you, Mr Speaker, he is not alone when he calls it a scam. He is not at all alone, because there are hundreds—and not just hundreds, there are thousands; and not just thousands, there are tens of thousands and, I tell you, hundreds of thousands of people across the province of Ontario who agree with this gentleman from Barrie. You see, what they have been asking for is an opportunity to see the issue fully debated. They have been asking for an opportunity to see the Liberals defend the position that they have taken on Bill 68 and on auto insurance in general. They are asking for an opportunity to hear their concerns, people who share their fears. I mean, they are asking for this issue to be debated.

My friend sitting beside me, the member for Hamilton Mountain, can read the writing on the wall. He knows that if this legislation is passed, innocent injured victims across Ontario are going to suffer. He knows that.

Mr Charlton: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I do not believe I see a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: I have been advised that a quorum is not present.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1811

Mr Kormos: I do not want to mix my metaphors; I do not want to mix my messages either. I do not want to mix my letters.

Now, the gentleman from Barrie writes about him and his wife, 20 years old, a Pontiac 6000, an insurance premium of just over \$3,000. Is that affordable insurance? Is that a reasonable premium? Is that fair? Is it fair by anybody's stretch

of anybody's imagination? Of course not. We know that. We know that is not fair, and so do the members.

The sad thing is that the Liberals here in Ontario would sell out this gentleman from Barrie so that the insurance companies could make bigger and bigger profits. That is why this gentleman from Barrie, who was a long-time Liberal member—he has a Liberal membership card that is cut up into tiny little pieces because, like so many thousands of other people here in the province, the Liberal Party does not reflect his views. It reflects the views of the insurance industry, because the auto insurance industry wants this legislation really badly. It has for a long time. The auto insurance industry wants this legislation so badly because, heck, the legislation that it asked for was not anywhere near as draconian as the bill that is confronting drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims now.

You know what else, Mr Speaker? This is not the only Liberal membership card in Ontario that has been cut up in the last couple of days. I know we have received phone calls that others have, and not just tens and tens and tens, but beyond tens in score, and I tell you there are hundreds of Liberals and Liberal supporters, activists, across this province who will not see themselves as activists any more.

I told you, Mr Speaker, that this gentleman from Barrie sees himself as a working man. He says he is 20 years old, that he and his wife are just beginning their lives, their adult lives, their productive lives, their lives of contribution to the community, and he talks about premiums in excess of \$3,000 in one year alone. This gentleman knows, because the Minister of Financial Institutions told him, that premium increases are going to be as high as 50 per cent.

Ms Bryden: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I do not believe there is a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: I have been advised that a quorum is not present. Please call in the members.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1816

Mr Kormos: I was talking about this young man from Barrie who knows that he, like virtually every other driver in the province, could face premium increases of as high as 50 per cent if Bill 68 is permitted to pass. He knows that almost a third of a million people here in the province of Ontario could face premium increases of up to 80 per cent. Those are the people who are going to be forced into Facility Association. Those are the people who are going to be denied regular insurance coverage, not because they are bad drivers but because regular insurance companies simply will not cover them. It is as simple as that.

This gentleman writes that he is fearful of the premium increases that he is going to face if these Liberals are permitted to pass Bill 68. He knows that he could—and he is not certain, because there is no certainty about any of us—face premium increases of a sufficient size that he would be having to pay some \$4,500 a year, and that is if you use the 50 per cent factor. If he is one of those people who is forced into Facility, he is talking about even more. He is talking about premium increases of in excess of \$5,000 a year.

Ms Bryden: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I do not believe there is a quorum present. Would you check, please?

The Acting Speaker: Well, we will ask the table to check to see if a quorum is present.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is present, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: I am advised that a quorum is present. Actually, I am trying to think. Under the standing orders, there is nothing to prevent members from requesting quorums, is there? Not that I am aware of, so in theory, anyone can ask any time if a quorum is present.

Mr Kormos: The author of this letter says, "Now, if my fellow Liberals"—he corrects that; he says, "If my once fellow Liberals." Just do not forget, Mr Speaker, we are talking about a gentleman here who, although a long-time member of the Liberal Party, sent in his Liberal membership card shredded to pieces as an expression of disdain for people like the member for Dovercourt.

This gentleman from Barrie has nothing but disdain for the member for Dovercourt, because he knows that the member for Dovercourt does not represent the people of his riding. He knows that the member for Dovercourt is but a member of a caucus that—you see, people out on the street call people like him Liberal hacks, guys and gals who let their strings be pulled; who cannot think for themselves; who could not, if their lives depended on it, come up with an original thought; who are just pathetic little people, the smallest of people in the eyes of this gentleman from Barrie.

1820

People like this gentleman from Barrie call the member for Dovercourt a zero. If you are mentioning this member for Dovercourt to people from Barrie, they say, "Which one is that?" They would say, "Which zero is that?" Because, you see, there are so many zeros sitting in this Liberal caucus. What is a zero, Mr Speaker? A zero is a person who is afraid to represent his or her constituents. A zero is a person who is a hack. A zero is a person who would sell out the people, the drivers, the taxpayers, the innocent injured victims of Ontario in exchange for the profits of the auto insurance industry. That is what a zero is.

This gentleman from Barrie says: "If my once fellow Liberal members would do some quick calculations—and I know they can; they have lots of practice adding up money in their bulging bank accounts—they would see that those numbers add up to 10 per cent of our gross annual income or, more accurately, 13 per cent of our yearly take-home pay. However, what concerns me even more is the loss of proper coverage that will be passed on to the Ontario driver." That is what this gentleman from Barrie writes.

And do you know what, Mr Speaker? Up in my office in a bookcase, the one that has my Oxford English dictionary, on the bottom shelf, is a collection of the submissions that were made to the standing committee on general government during the brief, brief hearings. That fills up a whole shelf of these expandable files, plus three, four or five, I think there are, three-inch, black, three-ring binders. You are talking about a whole lot of effort that went into a whole lot of preparation by a whole lot of people during the course of the general government committee hearings, and their effort was in vain.

But let's make sure that the disdain that the Liberals have for those kinds of hardworking, interested people, does not spread across the floor. Let's make sure that we in the opposition continue to fight for the drivers who have been deserted by the Liberals of Ontario, continue to fight for the taxpayers who have been deserted by the Liberals and continue to fight for the innocent injured victims, most of whom will be denied compen-

sation for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life, because this gentleman from Barrie writes that what concerns him even more than the premium increases he is going to face is the loss of proper coverage that will be passed on to the Ontario driver.

On 2 March 1990, this gentleman's wife was struck head-on by an impaired driver, driving a stolen pickup truck and with an already suspended licence for impaired driving. This gentleman writes: "The car that Angela was driving was written off. The car was a total." He writes, "But fortunately Angela wasn't."

Now, his wife experienced bumps and bruises, and even the police officer who arrived on the scene found it just incredible that Angela's injuries were not more significant. The police officer who arrived at this particular accident scene said he just could not believe that the injuries were not more severe. Nevertheless—you see, here is the crux of all this—this young lady still experiences pain from that accident. The physical injuries that she displayed at the time of the accident and immediately afterwards were so, I guess, unimpressive that they caused the police officer attending to exclaim that he was surprised the injuries were not more severe. Yet, you see, notwithstanding that the physical manifestation of those injuries was so modest, it remains that this young lady, this very young lady, still experiences pain as a result of that accident.

Now, this gentleman—who writes to all of us, really; he wrote to my office, but his message is one for everybody here, not just in this assembly but in the province of Ontario—says what he has learned is that if Bill 68 were in effect, Angela could not be compensated for pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life. If the Liberals' Bill 68 were law now, Angela would be barred from receiving any compensation, not because she was in any way negligent, not because she was in any way at fault, but because she was the—

Mr Lupusella: Mr Speaker, on a point of order—

An hon member: Go and take another Valium, Tony.

The Speaker: Order. Point of order.

Mr Lupusella: This gentleman has been out of order consistently. We are dealing with a motion before the Legislature and he is talking about generalities of accidents and the effects of the bill. I think he has to talk about allocation of time, nothing else.

The Speaker: I have been listening very carefully. The point has been raised on a number of occasions previously. I listened very carefully to the member on his point of order and I will ask the member to continue.

Mr Kormos: What I should indicate, perhaps, is that we are of course discussing a time allocation motion, and the concern that we have in opposition to this time allocation motion is that the time provided, two scant afternoons, does not permit sufficient time for an adequate consideration of all of the issues. Why I am going through some of these experiences is because they are not hypothetical. They are real experiences of real people. What they illustrate is that two scant afternoons, two two-and-a-half-hour sessions, just are not adequate for a meaningful discussion of Bill 68 and what it is going to do to people across Ontario, are they?

1830

I know that Liberal members have spoken to me in privacy to express their concern about the fact that this motion is on the floor. I know that Liberal members have come to me to ask me whether I knew of any parliamentary tricks that would some-

how get this motion ruled out of order because these same Liberal members are getting pressure from their constituents. These same Liberal members are getting pressure not only from their constituents, but they are getting pressure from their membership in their ridings. They are getting pressure from activists, from the inner circle. They are getting pressure from their financial supporters.

I am going to interrupt the comments about the fellow from Barrie for just a moment.

Here is a letter that says: "Dear Mr Kormos: Re Bill 68, I have been watching the debate on time limitation on the evening rerun."

I got a phone call the other day. The message is in here somewhere and the caller said, "Look, we are senior citizens and we have been trying to watch this debate since April 3 but we know that we have missed a couple of afternoons." The request was: "Look, when you are finished, would you please start over again at the beginning so that we could have a chance to see the parts we omitted."

Here is a gentleman who writes: "I have been watching the debate on time limitation on the evening rerun. Unfortunately, I cannot send you a ripped-up Liberal Party membership card because I destroyed my card after Premier Peterson announced that he had a very specific plan to lower insurance rates."

I am going to edit the letter right here. The next statement is a very personal opinion of this author, one which contains language that is indeed unparliamentary. For that reason, I am going to take the liberty of editing the letter. I am going to omit the next sentence. I tell members, it is important to understand what people like this gentleman are writing about because they are writing about their sense of having been deserted. So I am going to omit a portion of the next sentence and indicate that this author of this letter found that this was merely a cynical ploy for votes.

"We should be always mindful of that very specific promise in September 1987, the promise that the Premier had a very specific plan to lower auto insurance rates."

Members remember that, do they not? People across the province remember that promise. They remember it so well. The people in the Legislature have been asking the Premier and the Minister of Financial Institutions, we have been asking the government House leader, we have been asking anybody we could, what is this very specific plan that the Premier had in mind when he made that promise back in 1987?

In any event, this author notes that he joined the Liberal Party in 1977. He is a former vice-president of the Toronto and District Liberal Association. In 1980, he helped manage the campaign of the Minister of Health. The Minister of Health might be interested in this letter and this author because, in 1980, he helped manage her campaign in Wilson Heights. In 1985, he campaigned for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology and, in fact, held a cocktail party for him in his home.

He is the former executive vice-president of the federal Eglinton-Lawrence Liberal Association. He was a co-campaign manager for Roland de Corneille in the 1979, 1980 and 1984 federal elections and was a delegate to the federal Liberal leadership convention in 1984.

In 1987, he became a member of the provincial Lawrence Liberal Association and was on the slate of candidates for the executive, having run for executive vice-president. In 1987, he helped campaign for the Minister of Health. She told him that a Liberal government would never take away an injured accident victim's right to sue. Listen carefully. When the author of this

letter campaigned for the Minister of Health in the 1987 general election, the Minister of Health, candidate as she was then, told this gentleman that a Liberal government would never take away an injured accident victim's right to sue from him or her. "Little did she know," this author writes, and asked her if she was prepared to vote against Bill 68.

This man says that he doubts he will ever vote Liberal again, that this government is mean-spirited, arrogant and deceitful. "How dare they refer to Bill 68 as the Ontario motorist protection plan?" He jokingly says, "Why don't you ask the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations to investigate this matter?" Do members see how concerned this author is? He, I guess only half facetiously, only somewhat facetiously, says that maybe the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations ought to inquire into the use of the title, Ontario motorist protection plan.

This person writes that he carries on practice as a personal injury lawyer. What that means is that the author of this letter practises law and represents people who have been injured in motor vehicle accidents, among other things.

He says this: "I have had to hire additional staff to get ready for the anticipated litigation once this bill becomes law." See what is happening? Lawyers across Ontario, like this gentleman, expect there to be more litigation, more legal work, more courtrooms being occupied, more lawyers being paid fees once this bill passes than before.

This author writes, "Notwithstanding that no-fault benefits are a measly \$141 per week now, insurers are loath to pay them." He writes that he has launched and is presently pursuing a number of bad-faith claims against insurers for failing to pay no-fault benefits. He writes that he is also pursuing a number of claims for the payment of the present rehabilitation benefits.

He goes on to mention a number of cases in point:

"Mr H," he writes, "had an accident in April 1989. He is insured by Scottish and York. He has not worked since the accident. His disability has been well documented by specialists. He has lost his job because he is unable to return to work. Scottish and York refuses to pay no-fault disability benefits and simply refuses to pay for rehabilitation assistance. Mr H, who has no-fault benefits right now, in Ontario, in 1990, has not been able to collect them from Scottish and York. He has had to resort to general welfare assistance.

"Mrs I is insured by Economical Mutual Insurance Co. As a result of an accident in November 1988, she sustained a severe head injury. She was in a coma for several months. She is now permanently brain-damaged and is confined to a wheelchair. This lady, Mrs I, requires assistance in all her home care activities. She is a patient at Riverdale Hospital. With appropriate financial support she can go home, but her claim is being litigated. Economical, the insurance company, simply refuses to pay her rehabilitation assistance and will not advance sufficient no-fault disability benefits by way of a lump sum to enable her to go home."

How mean can you get? Just how mean-spirited can you get? The author of this letter offered to actuarially reduce the amount due. He says: "She will likely remain at Riverdale at taxpayers' expense until the claim is settled. Her family is devastated and is on the verge of disintegrating."

1840

This author says he can go on and on with these horror stories. He asks, "When will the people of Ontario wake up?" and he prevails upon us that it is now up to us to wake them up. I guess if this goes on late enough this evening, we may well

keep a few people awake. We may even put a few people restfully to sleep. In any event, here we are.

He encloses a postscript. He says, "Please say hello to my friends in the Liberal caucus."

Barry Edson, the author of that letter, is a man who obviously, only after a great deal of pain and effort on his part, only after a great deal of agony, finds himself in a position where he has to reject the party in which he has been thoroughly involved for so long.

Mr Mackenzie: Is he the one who ran so many campaigns for them?

Mr Kormos: He was a campaign manager. He helped campaign for the Minister of Health; he helped campaign for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology; he has been on riding executives; he has undoubtedly been a financial contributor to the Liberal Party. And more so than the money, because we all know that candidates' money—well, I guess it all depends. If Patti Starr is on the Christmas card list, I suppose money is not that much of a problem at all, but by and large it is not the money that is the difficult part in a campaign, because there are supposed to be limits on campaign spending.

It is the workers, it is the people who get out there and knock on doors, help distribute material and help organize an effective campaign. That is what Mr Edson clearly was. By anybody's interpretation, Mr Edson was clearly one of those very same sorts of workers.

He feels abandoned. I can tell you this, Mr Speaker. If Mr Edson, as an executive member of a riding association, as a long-time supporter, as a worker, as an activist, as an active member of the Liberal Party feels abandoned by the Liberals in Ontario, surely the bulk of those in this province who are far less partisan feel doubly, triply, quadruply threatened by the Liberals' refusal to debate Bill 68, by their insistence, instead, on closure, on time allocation. Surely to goodness, if Barry Edson from Downsview feels abandoned by the Liberals in Ontario, the vast majority of people out there who do not purport to have party memberships in any political party feel doubly, triply or quadruply abandoned. Those are valid considerations when we are looking at whether or not we should support a time allocation motion.

Going back to Barry for just a minute, or two or three, do you remember Angela, the young wife of the young author of this letter, Mr Speaker? This is the fellow who sent in his Liberal membership card to me cut into pieces. He, like Mr Edson, was not a member of an executive, he probably was not a big financial contributor, but he was a member. He thought he could have a role, a say, in a political party that he thought would represent the things he thought were right, the things he believed in. Just like Mr Edson, as an executive member, as an activist, as a financial contributor who feels abandoned, this gentleman from Barrie does as well.

He writes about his wife, Angela. He talks about how Angela still experiences pain as a result of being the innocent injured victim of a drunk driver with a suspended licence as a result of his previous drunk driving conviction. This gentleman knows that his wife, Angela, would not receive compensation for her pain and suffering or for her loss of enjoyment of life. That is not to say there is not any pain there, it is not to say there is not any loss of enjoyment of life, it is not to say that she was not a victim, it is not to say that she was not injured, but her injuries do not pass the threshold. If Bill 68 were in effect, her injuries would disentitle her from being compensated for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life.

In response to that understanding, this ex-Liberal-Party member simply asks: "Is this fair? Is that just?" Is there a single fair-minded person here in the province of Ontario who would say that is right? This gentleman says he would like the people of Ontario to know that this is what the Liberals are proposing to give to him through Bill 68—not give; I submit, more accurately, force upon them—a system wherein a drunk driver can steal a vehicle, hit an innocent passerby head on and the victim pays. The victim goes through pain and mental anguish, has her life turned upside down and, on top of it all, has to deal with an uncaring insurance company, while the offender is getting three or four meals a day with free rent, in this instance paid for with our tax dollars.

Mr Mackenzie: Mr Speaker, I wonder if you could check if there is a quorum in the House?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1849

The Speaker: A quorum is present. The member may continue.

Mr Kormos: I am going to move my chair away a little bit, because I need some room to engage in some body language here.

This gentleman from Barrie asked me to tell you, Mr Speaker, that he is not a rich man; he is not a doctor, he is not a lawyer. Remember, this is exactly what we were talking about. He says, as far as the Liberals are concerned, he is not even an influential man. "What I am is an honest, hard-working, proud, taxpaying citizen of Ontario and, as of last week, a former Liberal who at present is being ripped off by the insurance industry." Those are not my words; those are his words. "And if the Liberals have it their way, they will be ripping me off too." Then he questions: "As if they already are not? So, Mr Kormos, I would like you, the Liberals and all citizens of Ontario to know that I now plan to join another party."

This man does not want to belong to the Liberal Party any more; he is going to join another party. He writes which party he is going to join, and I am not going to indicate which it is; I do not think that is important. This gentleman from Barrie writes that he would like me to know, he would like you to know, Mr Speaker, he would like all the Liberals and the citizens of Ontario to know that, having left the Liberal Party, he plans to join another party. He plans to join one of the mainstream parties, one of the three major parties here in the province of Ontario, and I am not going to tell you what it is. But I will tell you what he says next. He says he realizes now that:

"The Liberal Party has become nothing but Tories with red ties. The Liberal backbenchers are not representing their constituents as they are supposed to do. They are simply kissing the feet of the Premier and his cabinet. They are acting like little boys and girls, not the men and women they are supposed to be. I, sir, am ashamed to admit that I was once a card-carrying member of this playschool political party. But then we all make mistakes. I have enclosed my liberal"—yes, sir, that is "liberal" with a small "l." So this gentleman writes "liberal" with a small "l," representing the gutless, small-willed, backbench Liberals. Again I am going to paraphrase; I do not have the gonads to fight for what is right:

"Membership cards, both federal and provincial—I have sent them to you in the form they can best be used, as garbage. I would like to say one last thing to the Liberal Party. I may be just a middle-class factory worker, and to you Liberals my concerns may be so minuscule and so unimportant"—

He writes that there are some 1,028,000 others in the manufacturing business, the same type of business he is a worker in. Remember, he made filter cloth up in Barrie; that is what this gentleman does for a living. He says, remember, there are some 1,028,000 others in the same manufacturing sector in Ontario who will feel the same way as he does. This gentleman writes that he intends to do his part to make sure that as many of those people do not support the Liberals in the next election as possible:

"Mr Kormos, I urge you to use my letter in Parliament and please contact me at any time to tell me how I can help with this cause or any other. Could you please also send me Hansard reports from the last couple of weeks? If you could put me in touch with the NDP party from my riding, I would most appreciate it. Again, contact me at any time, and for all the people of Ontario, keep up your/our fight."

I was pretty moved by that letter, Mr Speaker, just as with the letter from Herman Turkstra from Hamilton the other day—you recall that one—and just like the letter from Barry Edson. These are painful decisions for people to make, and I am convinced that they are not made lightly, that they are not made without a great deal of thought. I am convinced that these people cry out for a thorough debate of the issues. These people are calling out to the members of this Legislature to recognize that our function, our role, is to engage in thorough, complete and careful debate of all the issues before us. Again, all the more so when it is an issue like this that has so many considerations to be had, all the more so when it is an issue like this that affects so many people in so many different ways.

Everybody in this Legislature has, I know, been overwhelmed by the concern of the community—I do not just mean the city of Toronto; I do not just mean the cities of Welland or Thorold; I mean the whole province—about the Liberal refusal to debate. That is what this time allocation motion is all about: it is a flight from debate. I should say that I have mentioned time and time again, not to be repetitive but to draw attention to, the fact that if the House leader merely withdrew this motion, why then we would have nothing more to say about time allocation at this point in time; we would be able to get on with the task at hand, of voting for Bill 68 after we had a careful debate about it.

The sad reality—is it not sad, Mr Speaker, because who has been filibusterous around here? The Liberals have with all their motions. The Liberals have been filibusterous. They are the ones who have been obstructionist because it is their time allocation motion that has interfered with a discussion of Bill 68. Just think, Mr Speaker, if we had started discussion of Bill 68 back on 3 April, when we started the discussion of this time allocation motion, I bet you dollars to doughnuts right now that we would have debated it completely and fully. I just cannot help but believe that we might even have finished debating it a week ago and we could have moved on to other business.

1900

I get in trouble all the time, Mr Speaker, for referring to members by name. I appreciate being reminded each and every time I do that how improper it is. As I have told you time and time again, there are a whole lot of Liberal backbenchers here who certainly do not make an impression on the assembly and

about whom it is hard to remember where they come from and indeed who they are. For some of them it is hard to remember what the heck they are doing here.

Let me tell you what type of concern there is in the community once again about this time allocation motion. We have been getting thousands and thousands of phone calls from all sorts of people, and hundreds of letters. Some of those people have indeed been lawyers. Lawyers have always had something to say about this. The strange thing is that a whole whack of them have been Liberal lawyers. Just like, remember, when I told you what Mr Turkstra had to say. One of the things about which he felt great concern, Mr Turkstra from Hamilton, was that there was an effort to raise the issue of Bill 68 at the recent Liberal convention in Windsor but Mr Turkstra and his colleagues were prevented from doing so. I appreciate that the operation of the Liberal Party, apart from its role here in the House, is a different thing, in the most technical sense, from the Liberal caucus that is here.

But I tell you, Mr Speaker, I am afraid about a party that has power that shows disdain for democracy here at Queen's Park, in the Legislative Assembly, and similarly shows that same disdain internally when it comes to its own members.

I have a copy of an interesting letter addressed to the High Park-Swansea Liberal Association, on Pacific Avenue.

Do you hear those drums, Mr Speaker? I hope they do not mean something other than somebody practising with their drums.

The High Park-Swansea Liberal Association had this letter mailed to it on 23 April 1990.

"High Park-Swansea Liberal Association,

"66 Pacific Avenue, Apartment 911,

"Toronto, M6P 2P4:

"Dear Sirs—"

I wish people would stop doing that. I have really disciplined myself, and the staff who help me, to write "Dear Madam or Sir," because it is 1990 now and we have got to smarten up and do things properly. My only bit of criticism here would be that the letter said "Dear Sirs" when in fact I know that in our party women have roles in leadership, roles in executive, roles in administration. I do not know whether that is the same for High Park-Swansea. I think Nestor Kostyniuk would—I think it was an oversight. He did not type the letter; he had staff type it. But it reads, "Dear Sirs."

Mr Kostyniuk writes that he has been a supporter of the Liberals all of his life, the Ontario Liberal government of which—I have always been uncertain about how to do this. I have always thought that if you quoted somebody, it was okay to use the person's name, but just to err on the side of caution, he is writing about—

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Holy cow, Mr Speaker, there you go. Here is another Liberal member who—I am going to find it sooner or later; I just do not see him here on the chart. There he is, number 59, the member for High Park-Swansea, a Liberal backbencher.

I mean, we have only got six front benches here in the New Democratic Party. Look at all the front benches the Liberals have.

Anyway, this Liberal backbencher, from High Park-Swansea—I should have known that, because the letter was addressed to the High Park-Swansea Liberal Association—in any event, Nestor Kostyniuk—K-o-s-t-y-n-i-u-k, and Nestor, of course, is spelled N-e-s-t-o-r—that is so that the Hansard people

do not tear their hair out trying to figure out how to spell Kostyniuk. But I bet you there are more than a few people working for Hansard who could spell Kostyniuk with their eyes closed standing on their heads.

Nestor Kostyniuk writes that he has been a supporter of the Liberals all of his life. "The Ontario Liberal government, of which the member for High Park-Swansea is a member, is no longer acting in the best interests of the people of Ontario. Specifically, the high-handed and arbitrary actions on the so-called Ontario motorist protection plan"—

I am going to use this chair to hold some of the notes that I am going to refer to over the next while. Mr Kostyniuk writes that:

"The Ontario Liberal government, of which the member for High Park-Swansea is a member, is no longer acting in the best interests of the people of Ontario. Specifically," he says, "the high-handed and arbitrary actions on the so-called Ontario motorist protection plan is despicable. The member for High Park-Swansea's government has chosen to take away the rights of accident victims and have replaced it with"—

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Howdy. Sorry about that interjection, but I had to greet one of our members, the member for Riverdale. The member for Riverdale, he ain't going to sell out the people of Ontario. He ain't beholden to the auto insurance industry. The member for Riverdale is here to join in the fight for taxpayers, and fight we will; the fight for drivers, and fight we will; and the fight for innocent injured accident victims, and fight we will.

And you know what, Mr Speaker? We are going to fight to have some principle restored here at Queen's Park. I mean, what this joint needs is a little bit of ethics, if you do not mind me saying so. Right now I tell you, if we were to give this joint a transfusion of ethics right now, we would need big bottles of ethics.

But I tell you, Mr Speaker, this gentleman who writes writes that the government of the member for High Park-Swansea has chosen to take away the rights of accident victims and has replaced them with enhanced no-fault benefits.

You know what, Mr Speaker? This is important. This Mr Kostyniuk notes, and he notes something I have been trying to tell you and the Liberal members here for a long time now—I mean a long time. Lord knows, I wish I did not have to argue this motion any more. Lord knows, I wish I could sit down and we could carry on with other members talking about Bill 68. But you know what Mr Kostyniuk says in his letter to the High Park-Swansea Liberal Association, hoping that the member for High Park-Swansea has it read to him—

1910

Well, it is true. People are laughing about that, and it is not something to laugh about. Nestor Kostyniuk sends it to the High Park-Swansea Liberal Association, and this is what he says, "We already have no-fault benefits here in the province of Ontario." That is what Mr Kostyniuk feels obliged to tell his own Liberal riding association, so that, hopefully, they will send the message on to the member for High Park-Swansea Liberal Association, and if they do, maybe that member will be one of the 29 Liberals who can come back here after the next general election.

Remember the lady who wrote in and we talked about last week? Remember she speculated as to what the real concern was that prompted the time allocation motion. She said the real

concern was that the Premier of Ontario does not want a debate about Bill 68 because he is worried about Liberal backbenchers abandoning this Bill 68 ship, because remember what the analysis was.

The analysis was that the Premier has dumped a whole lot of his backbenchers. I mean, even the Premier knows that there are a whole of Liberals here and it is inevitable, and there is nothing wrong with it, but it is inevitable that with this size majority—I am told they elected 94 members in the last general election, and a lot of them, from a political analyst's point of view, have no business being here, not because they are any better or any worse than anybody else, but because they were elected in a Liberal landslide, in a Liberal sweep. They were elected to Tory ridings.

And you see, even the Premier knows that they are not going to get re-elected. I mean, why else would the Premier overlook, let's say, a leading member of the agricultural community when it came time to appoint a Minister of Agriculture? Why would that happen? That member has been thrown to the wolves. Do you not think so?

There are people here with a lot more experience at Queen's Park than I have who really understand that analysis far better than I do, that there are a whole bunch of Liberals who are going to get defeated in the next general election, just because—I am not saying that—Who knows? We still have an election campaign to fight and I am not saying right now; it all depends upon how the campaign is fought as to who wins the election.

But do you know what happened? I was in the supermarket the other day, Mr Speaker, and I was thinking about this time allocation motion—well, I was—and what I was buying is some of that fresh-squeezed orange juice, not the pasteurized kind made from condensed orange juice but the fresh-squeezed orange juice, and there the tabloids were at the checkout counter.

One of them—and I do not know which one it is; perhaps some of the Liberals who read that stuff could tell me—perhaps the National Enquirer, said “Jeanne Dixon Predicts” as the headline.

I thought about what I was going to say this evening. It prompted me to think about, “What I am going to say Thursday night when we go for broke?” I mean, we are going for broke on this one. We are here for the long haul. This is it; this is the final shot.

As I say, I was standing there in the lineup with my fresh-squeezed orange juice, not the small container, but the big—I think it is a two-litre container or 1.6-litre or something; it is expensive, anyway—and there is “Jeanne Dixon Predicts” on the very front cover of one these tabloids. As I say, I have seen Liberals reading them here. They could perhaps help me whether it is the National Enquirer or Star or what have you.

I have seen them reading them, Mr Speaker. You can see them when they are sitting in the back benches. Lord knows, they have got nothing else to do, you know, and Alexandre Dumas or anything like that—I mean, Reader's Digest—would be too demanding, so you are talking about National Enquirer time. Let's face it. I know they are reading it because I can see their lips move.

But there it is, the front page of this tabloid at the supermarket checkout and it says “Jeanne Dixon Predicts.”

As I say, I am trying to think about what I am going to talk about next when we discuss this time allocation motion here at Queen's Park, and I realize, “Well, of course, that's what it's all about,” because you cannot predict the outcome of the next

election. And I tell you, I do not care what the Liberals do, this auto insurance legislation is going to be an issue.

But I can tell you this, Mr Speaker, that the 29 Liberals who vote against Bill 68 are going to get re-elected. It is true, Mr Speaker, and those same 29 Liberals are going to be the ones who support a full debate, because you see, it is those same 29 Liberals who are not going to be satisfied with being identified as part of that gang that sold out the drivers of Ontario, that sold out the victims of Ontario, sold out the innocent injured victims—that is what they are; the innocent injured victims—that sold out the taxpayers of Ontario in favour of the profits of the private corporate auto insurance industry.

Jeanne Dixon, were she here today, would agree with me. She would predict, with unfailing accuracy, that the same 29 Liberal members who voted against time allocation, this very motion, and who voted against Bill 68, those 29 Liberals would not have to look at retirement plans.

I bet there are 29 of them there. I know that some have spoken with me to canvass that very prospect, and I have every intention of respecting the confidences and the confidentiality, of course, of those Liberal backbenchers who have indicated a desire to vote against time allocation and a desire to vote against Bill 68.

They know that the ministry is simply pumping out rubbish. The ones who have spoken to me know that the Ministry of Financial Institutions is pumping out rubbish about this bill, that what it is is an incredible selling job, a slick, slick, slick selling job.

That is how one of the Liberal members, the member for Mississauga West, could have in his householder such incredible, incredible statements. It is difficult to identify any of those statements with anybody's version of veracity.

But look what is happening within the Liberal ranks, people like Nestor Kostyniuk.

Do you remember Barry Edson, Mr Speaker? Do you remember Barry Edson? He is a lawyer, also a campaigner for the Minister of Health in her 1987 election, also an activist in the Liberal party, just like Mr Kostyniuk, and I am sure Mr Edson was a contributor, a financial contributor, because political parties need that.

I know, once again, that some political parties in this province have managed to dip into charitable funds that they are not supposed to dip into, and far be it from me to bring up the Patti Star affair again and again and again, because that is not what we are talking about here, is it? We are not talking about the fridges and the paint jobs, and we are not talking about the close links with a very powerful—powerful with a capital P—“we lean on you, fellow, and you ain't ever going to walk again” type of development industry. I mean, we are talking powerful. Far be it from me to talk about that stench emanating from the Liberal Party, filling the nostrils of voters right here in the province of Ontario, a stench, a veritable stench of corruption coming out of this Liberal Party.

1920

I tell you, Mr Speaker, the stink of that corruption within the Liberal Party will not be tolerated by drivers and taxpayers and innocent victims and voters right here in the province of Ontario, because at some point this is going to have to go to the electorate. At some point this is going to have to go to the electorate.

People have been writing their member of provincial Parliament, have they not? You ought to see some of the stuff that

these Liberals are peddling off as responses. You ought to see it. Holy cow, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, you are sweating. Perhaps the fans could be turned on. I am sorry.

You ought to see some of the responses people are getting from Liberal members when they write in about Bill 68, about auto insurance here in the province of Ontario.

And if you think those responses are out of this world, you ought to see the responses that people are getting when they write to their Liberal member complaining about this guillotine, this closure motion. It is a closure motion. It is a closure motion that we are talking about right now, the very sort of thing that the Tories—

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Well, they do, and I know you are no crazier about it than I am—the sort of thing that the Tories have gotten into the regular habit of doing up at Parliament Hill.

Perhaps it is appropriate that the Liberals are trying to impose closure here at Queen's Park, just like their Tory clones on Parliament Hill impose closure there, because the reason the Tories imposed closure on GST is because GST is the most popular thing any government has ever done in this country. You know that; you know that that is true—the most undemocratic thing that has ever been done, the most unparliamentary thing that has ever been done. And you know what? The Tories, the Conservatives, Brian Mulroney imposes closure on the opposition at Parliament Hill so that he can ram through the GST, while the Liberals impose closure here at Queen's Park so that they can ram through Bill 68. The similarities are significant and impressive.

We have gotten sidetracked a little bit from the letter of Mr Kostyniuk, and I dearly want to tell you what people like Nestor Kostyniuk have to say about crummy, crummy motions like this time allocation motion, which is in effect a closure motion. Why do we call it any different? Why do we sanitize it by calling it time allocation when in effect it is closure? Down where I come from they would say: "Cut the crap. Call it the way it is." Do they not say that where you come from, Mr Speaker, when you want to call a spade a spade?

Let's get down to brass tacks here. This is a closure motion, plain and simple. The Liberals have friends in the auto insurance industry who want Bill 68 passed. They want it passed real bad. How bad? One billion dollars worth of bad. A billion bucks: that is the windfall the auto insurance industry in Ontario is looking at once Bill 68 gets passed. That is in the first year alone.

The insurance industry wants this passed real bad. I have a feeling they have been leaning on some of these Liberal members. Well, not the backbenchers. The backbenchers in the Liberal Party are insignificant in the total scheme of things. They are bodies that are supposed to be there when they are supposed to be there. They are supposed to vote when they are supposed to vote. Sadly, they are supposed to vote mindlessly, which is not hard for a whole lot of them, I tell you.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: That brought a smile to my face, an interjection that the audience could not hear, but some dummy is saying to speak for myself. Who the hell does he think I am speaking for? I am not speaking for the auto insurance industry. I am speaking for the New Democrats. I tell you, Mr Speaker, we speak out on behalf of the victims, the innocent injured victims. We speak out on behalf of the taxpayers who are going

to be gouged by this legislation. We speak out on behalf of the drivers who are going to face premium increases of up to 50 per cent. How do we know that? Because the Minister of Financial Institutions told us that.

Now we discover but a week and a half ago that for almost one third of a million drivers right here in the province of Ontario, when Bill 68 passes, premium increases of up to 80 per cent. What has that to do with a very specific plan to lower automobile insurance premiums? That is why the Premier of Ontario—you know who he is, from London—the Minister of Financial Institutions and the rest of that Liberal gang have the comforter pulled up real tight to their chins and all they can do is look over and see Allstate on one side and Co-operators on the other, and far be it from me—

Mr Villeneuve: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: There is a very important commemorative event out on the front lawn of Queen's Park right now. It is commemorating the Chernobyl disaster. We have quite a few members out there. I would like to move adjournment of the House so that our members in this Legislature could commemorate this very terrible disaster of Chernobyl.

Hon Mr Ward: Mr Speaker, I understand that the member has moved adjournment of the House, but I do not believe he had the floor at the time he moved it.

The Acting Speaker: I agree with the honourable House leader that the honourable member for Welland-Thorold had the floor. I was recognizing the honourable member on a point of order and he was out of order.

1930

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Where was I? Nestor Kostyniuk. It tell you, Nestor Kostyniuk has—I am ordering supper, Mr Speaker. I am getting a hot beef with fries, gravy on the fries, peas and a diet Coke. Is there anything you would like? A tea with lemon? You got it, Mr Speaker. I will do my very best.

I hate these points of order because all they do is interrupt my train of thought. Sometimes what I have to do to recapture it is to back up about 15 minutes, 20 minutes or a half-hour. You see, you are going to jump up, Mr Speaker, and say, "Member for Welland-Thorold, you're being repetitive," and I am going to say: "But Mr Speaker, it's not my fault. I didn't interrupt myself. I have never interrupted myself in my life." We need a little bit of discipline around here, a little bit of control and a little bit of seriousness about what is happening.

Look at what Mr Kostyniuk says in his letter to the High Park-Swansea Liberal Association. He points out that we in Ontario already have no-fault benefits. He points out that this plan enhances the current no-fault benefits. By and large they enhance them to the point where they would have been had they been indexed properly plus a little bit more, but little else.

Mr Fleet's government—sorry; I should not mention Mr Fleet by name. He is the member for High Park-Swansea. I am sure Mr Fleet would be pleased that I did not mention him by name, because he is the person being condemned in this letter. Mr Fl—the member for—I almost said "Mr Fleet" again and I saw you start to jump up. You almost spilled that glass of water, Mr Speaker, when I said "David Fleet" instead of "member for High Park-Swansea." Again, all the more fitting in this case that I should not mention Mr Fleet by name, because this letter is dumping all over him.

Anyway, the member for High Park-Swansea's government—we are talking about the Liberal Party—has convinced

the media that the benefits provided are better than the tort system. This is where the punctuation is very important, if Hansard would only bear with me.

Mr Reville: On a point of order, Mr Speaker. I think the quorum has failed.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals: A quorum is present, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Before the honourable member for Welland-Thorold continues, we have some difficulties, I suppose, if a quorum call is asked repetitively, but again, as I indicated, in the standing orders there is nothing specific that limits members asking for a quorum call. I recognize the honourable member for Yorkview indicated earlier that it was all right as long as it is not abusive. I think that would be a fair approach to take under the circumstances.

Mr Reville: On that same point of order, Mr Speaker: I did count 17, so I do not think that was an abuse.

The Acting Speaker: I was not referring to your point of order and quorum call particularly, just to quorum calls generally. The member for Welland-Thorold?

Mr Kormos: Welland-Thorold it is, Mr Speaker.

I was telling members, this is where the punctuation is very important. The Hansard people have to really pay close attention to me, because Mr Kostyniuk writes: "I disagree. Mr Fleet is a lawyer." This is where the punctuation is important. He writes, "I disagree" period. "Mr Fleet is a lawyer" period. This is just the kind of guy I am. I could have said that in perfect candour and Hansard might have put down, "I disagree Mr Fleet is a lawyer." People would have read Hansard and said: "Whoa. He didn't appear to be one. Now we read that he's not."

On the contrary, it is just the kind of guy I am to be very careful about that sort of thing. I could have, either through malice or mere inadvertence, created a Hansard transcript that would have had Nestor Kostyniuk disagreeing about Mr Fleet's capacity to perform his professional tasks. But on the contrary, you can take it from me, Mr Speaker, that cheap shots are not part of this itinerary.

Mr Kostyniuk writes, "I disagree. Mr Fleet is a lawyer." See how punctuation can be so important? Punctuation can change everything. "Mr Fleet is a lawyer." This is the point Mr Kostyniuk wants to make, "As a lawyer, Mr Fleet knows darned well that people who do not pass the threshold will receive little or nothing from Bill 68."

Mr Kostyniuk goes on, "I thought that the member for High Park-Swansea would fight for these victims, given his knowledge of their suffering." What Mr Kostyniuk is saying—this chair is in the way again, Mr Speaker—is that Mr Fleet should know better. What Mr Kostyniuk is saying is that Mr Fleet, as a lawyer, knows that the government is being less than honest when it tells the people in Ontario what Bill 68 is all about. That is why he writes what he does.

Mr Kostyniuk says, "I thought"—once again I am going to paraphrase so that the record, the transcript, the Hansard, will show that I am not referring to a member by name, because that would be improper and that would attract censure from you, Mr Speaker, perhaps on the advice of the Clerk—I do not know—because I know you rely on the Clerk for assistance. That is the Clerk's job here.

Our job in the opposition is to fight bad legislation. Our job in the opposition is to debate bills that come before this assembly. The Liberals here do not want to debate Bill 68. Is that not clear to you by virtue of what is going on here at Queen's Park?

It should be. I see a glimmer of affirmation in your eye, Mr Speaker. I know you cannot nod your head, but there are certain bodily responses that we simply cannot control. You see, that glimmer of affirmation, that glimmer of agreement that I saw in your eye tells me and permits me to tell the people of this assembly that the Speaker agrees, that the Speaker knows better than these Liberal backbenchers who are going to lose their jobs.

1940

Mr Reville: Except for 29 who are going to vote against it.

Mr Kormos: Except for the 29 who vote against this time allocation motion and the 29 who vote against Bill 68.

Nestor Kostyniuk said, "I thought that the member for High Park-Swansea would fight for these victims." One would hope that the member for High Park-Swansea would fight for innocent injured victims, if not as a lawyer, then as a member of this Legislative Assembly.

Mr Kostyniuk writes, "I thought that the member for High Park-Swansea would fight for these victims," the innocent injured victims of motor vehicle accidents, that he would fight for them, given his knowledge of their suffering. Mr Kostyniuk writes this in his letter to the High Park-Swansea Liberal Association, 66 Pacific Avenue, Apartment 911, Toronto, Ontario. I expect that if this is an incorrect address and this letter has been detoured, the member for High Park-Swansea, who is right here in the Legislature now, will jump up on a point of order and—

Mr Reville: He is not in his seat.

Mr Kormos: He can be put in his seat.

Mr Reville: In his place.

Mr Kormos: The voters of Ontario are going to put him in his place come the next general election, unless he indeed crawls out from under the thumb of the auto insurance industry and votes against this time allocation motion.

Nestor Kostyniuk has been a supporter of the Liberal Party all his life. Do not ever forget that, Mr Speaker, in the course of this conversation. He thought that the member for High Park-Swansea would fight for the victims, the little people, the hurt people, the crippled people, the injured people, the people in pain and the people who are suffering, especially given the member for High Park-Swansea's knowledge of their suffering.

What Mr Kostyniuk is saying is that the member for High Park-Swansea has a special familiarity because the member for High Park-Swansea is a lawyer, that he has a special familiarity with the type of pain, the type of suffering, the type of injuries experienced by innocent injured motor vehicle victims. Do you know what Mr Kostyniuk says? Let me tell you what Mr Kostyniuk says in his letter, Mr Speaker.

Mr Kostyniuk says that he is disappointed in the efforts of the member for High Park-Swansea and that he, Mr Kostyniuk, will not support him. It is not unique. It is sad, is as sad as the other letters we have read. It is as sad as the letter from Barry Edson in Downsview. It is as sad as the letter from the young man with his young wife, Angela, in Barrie. Do you remember Angela, Mr Speaker, a victim of a head-on by a drunk driver? Do you remember Angela, who would not have received a penny in compensation for pain and suffering and loss of enjoyment of life had Bill 68 been in effect when that accident occurred?

This is Angela's car after the accident. It is a total. Do you know what, Mr Speaker? Bill 68, the insurance company's and

the Liberal Party's insurance scheme, the one they are trying to ram through, would have repaired this car. But do you know what, Mr Speaker? It would not fix Angela.

You might want to come over and take this from me, Mr Speaker. I cannot go there. Mr Speaker, there is something wrong here. I am trying to submit something to you, sir. Somebody had better come and take this from me, or else this whole system is just going to fall to pieces. Thank you.

I want the Speaker to see that, because do you know what? That is what drunk drivers in stolen cars do. Do you remember Angela? Angela continues to experience pain and suffering as a result of what that drunk driver in the stolen car did to her. If Bill 68 had been law when that drunk driver totalled Angela in her car—you saw the photograph, Mr Speaker, it is about as grizzly a picture as you could ever see. I know that you are a lawyer and you are hardened to many of these things because you utilize your professional ability, your professional capacity; you are hardened to these things. Yet I know that you are moved by this because you can understand how much impact this accident had on this young lady's life.

Let me tell you about something that is really pathetic, just crummy and pathetic. It is the way these guys—I am talking about the Liberals—respond to well-meaning people who have been petitioning this government to dump Bill 68. All I want is the chance to confront the Minister of Financial Institutions with some of his own crummy statements, that is all I want; statements as recent as ones I received today. Do you remember the petition we presented, Mr Speaker? Of course you do, because I know you listened carefully when we presented the petition. It was back on 29 March. I presented a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it read as follows:

"Whereas Bill 68 is legislation that makes tragic changes to the rights of innocent injured motor vehicle accident victims;

"Whereas the Peterson government"—this is what the words of the petition are—"has made it clear that they want this legislation rammed through." It is going on right now; the Peterson Liberals want this legislation rammed through, "notwithstanding that people across Ontario have made it clear that they want this bad legislation dumped.

"Whereas there is nothing in Bill 68 that gives effect to David Peterson's promise in 1987 that he had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premium rates, because once this legislation is passed by the Liberals, auto insurance premiums will climb by as much as 50 per cent according to the Minister of Financial Institutions, Murray Elston." Do you remember him, Mr Speaker? Where is he tonight? I think the standing orders say that you are not supposed to mention a member's absence. Is that correct? If I were to talk about his complete absence during the course of the standing committee on general government hearings, is that correct or is that inappropriate? Help me, because I do not want to break the rules.

Oh, I see. The impression I get is that it is not proper to refer to a member's absence in the present tense. Let me tell you, Mr Speaker, the Minister of Financial Institutions was not here five minutes ago either.

The Acting Speaker: All right. Come on, we have been through that with lies.

Mr Kormos: Lies? The member has been listening to him too, has he? I tell you, Mr Speaker, you and I agree on a whole lot more than you think we do. I am hearing the same things you are and I am calling it the same way you are, and I respect you for that.

Remember the petition on 29 March? Do you remember that?

"Whereas there is nothing in Bill 68 that gives effect to David Peterson's promise in 1987 that he had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premium rates, because once this legislation is passed by the Liberals, auto insurance premiums will climb by as much as 50 per cent according to the Minister of Financial Institutions, Murray Elston;

"Whereas the Liberal government's auto insurance legislation will provide enormous taxpayer subsidies to the private corporate auto insurance industry, costing the Ontario taxpayer"—darn it, if we are going to stay here all night, there had better be 20 people in this chamber. I do not think there is a quorum and I am not going to speak to empty seats, I tell you that right now. I want a quorum call. What gives here?

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1951

Mr Kormos: I want to tell you something, Mr Speaker. A new record has just been set. More quorum calls have been asked for in the last hour and a half than ever before in the history of this Legislative Assembly and in the history of any legislative assembly in any province here in this Confederation. We are proud of that.

You know, Mr Speaker, you only said half of it. I was not going to read this time allocation motion; but you whetted people's appetites. You did. You talked about notice of motion and people out there who are listening to this—I tell you, people are, because it was on the six o'clock news—are saying, "Well, wait a minute, what gives here, what gives, because Kormos"—I am sorry, the member for Welland-Thorold—can I refer to myself by name, sir? In any event, the member for Welland-Thorold, that is I, was talking about time allocation motions since 3 April."

Then the Liberals introduced their crummy little budget, the smoke and mirrors one, and the Liberals promised that there was going to be debate about the budget for a whole bunch of days. I was angry because, I tell you, Mr Speaker, there have been people out there watching my discussion of the time allocation motion who phoned up on Tuesday and said, "What is this? Who is this guy, Bob whatever, the Treasurer? We expected to hear you talk about time allocation and about its impact on Bill 68." People were calling; they were concerned I was sick and that the Treasurer was but a filler. They thought it was some old tape that had been hauled out of the archives, out of the proverbial VCR morgue and foisted on them as some sort of makeshift excuse for what they had been used to hearing over the last three and four weeks.

Similarly, Wednesday. People are calling my office. People are concerned, they think that I am sick. My office assured them I am well and eager to talk about this time allocation motion except the Liberals are trying to jerk around with them. So it pleases me that we are back here.

I came here with stuff about the budget and, boy, did I have a speech about the budget. Once again, it is important to understand that the Liberals flee from debate, so I got a feeling that they were as concerned about what I was going to say about the budget as they are about what I am going to say about auto insurance and this time allocation motion so as to juggle the two. Really, it comes down to six of one, half a dozen of another.

I am not going to dwell on this, okay, but I was during my budget talk, which I am going to have to give later, some time next week or the week after or the week after that. I was going

to talk about the fact that this was really a non-budget. It was a pre-election budget. I had been told that, indeed, the sin taxes that were going to be imposed were far greater than that penny a cigarette tax that we learned about when the Treasurer gave his speech on Tuesday. I trust you had heard some of those same things.

The position that the Liberals were going to take was, forget about alcohol and tobacco, that there was going to be a proposal for the immediate payment of a \$100 penalty for such things as adultery, lying, cheating and stealing. This is going to be an original-sin tax. The sad thing is that the original-sin tax was unanimously voted down in Liberal caucus who felt that they themselves would have to unfairly bear the burden of that tax. That is how budgets happen.

I was going to talk a whole lot more about how this budget is about smoke and mirrors, but we are talking about a time allocation motion and you gave it short shrift. It is not fair. I am not being critical of you but it is simply not fair. It is not fair to the people who are paying close attention to what is happening.

I can tell from the glazed look on some of these Liberals' eyes in here that they either had a different dinner than I did or they are confused about what we are talking about. Sometimes it is helpful to bring everything back home. Right? I know you were trying to do that when you made reference to what it was we were discussing but simply to say notice of motion 4225 does not help the people that are trying to pay close attention.

What we are talking about is a motion that reads, "That, notwithstanding a standing order or special order of the House, in relation to Bill 68, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance, two sessional days shall be allotted to consideration of the bill in committee of the whole House. All amendments proposed to be moved to the bill shall be filed with the Clerk of the Assembly by 5 pm on the sessional day on which the bill is considered in the committee of the whole House. At 5:45 pm on the second of these sessional days, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved and the Chair of the committee of the whole House shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto and report the bill to the House."

2000

I want members to notice something, and this is a brief aside. I mean, it is an aside and it is brief. But the sad thing is that we have rules here about television, do we not? The rules are that the television cameras can only look at certain things at certain times. So the people who are watching this across Ontario right now cannot see the member for Essex-Kent holding this black-and-white, tabloid kind of newspaper in front of him. The only question is, is it the National Enquirer or is it the Globe and Mail? Viewers may well want to write in or phone in tomorrow with their choice. I want to hear how many people out there think it is the Globe and Mail. People who know the member for Essex-Kent—do not forget; remember who he is—how many really know that it is the National Enquirer? People may well want to call in. It is those little things, those little observations that make life interesting, especially here at Queen's Park.

Can members appreciate what a crummy motion this is? You really do not have to go further than read the first paragraph of this and any reasonable person would say, "Wait a minute." A reasonable person might call for the question because he would say, "We want to vote against this."

All that the House leader has to do is send me a note saying that he is going to withdraw this motion. That is all he has to do. I may not believe him if he said he was because—

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: That is right. There is absolutely no reason to believe the Liberal House leader or, quite frankly, any other Liberal here at Queen's Park or anywhere else.

Do members realize that we are talking about something of an exodus from the Liberal Party. We are talking about not just electoral support, we are talking about key members leaving the party; key members in key communities across Ontario leaving the Liberal Party. And they are not just quietly leaving the Liberal Party. It is one thing to sit in one's living room or one's rec room and speak with one's wife or friends and say, "You know, I just cannot bring myself to get involved in any more election campaigns with the Liberal candidate." These people are not just doing that. These people are phoning, writing letters to the editor, speaking to the press. These people are declaring their condemnation of the Liberal Party of Ontario openly. These people are mad as hell that they were denied an ability to argue the issue at the Liberals' own convention in Windsor recently—mad as all get out.

They are not particularly happy about this time allocation motion either. They are not particularly happy about it because the balance of that motion is: "At 5:45 pm on the second of these sessional days, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved and the Chair of the committee of the whole House shall interrupt the proceedings"—like so many Liberals have interrupted these proceedings—"and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto and report the bill to the House. Upon receiving the report of the committee of the whole House, the Speaker shall put the question for the adoption of the report forthwith"—not a day later, not an hour later, but forthwith, "which question shall be decided without amendment or debate."

The second paragraph of this motion is:

"That one further sessional day shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill. At 5:45 pm on such day, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further amendment or debate.

"That in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes."

Members will recall that a point of order was raised, and during the course of raising that point of order lengthy discussions were had about how dumb the motion was. It remains now that it is for the Liberals here to take a position once the question is put and deal with that motion appropriately.

You will recall that I was explaining to you a little while ago, Mr Speaker, a few moments ago before we were interrupted, before we were side-tracked, about the pathetic response of the government to all those people who went to great lengths to attempt to make their views known about Bill 68 by petition. The petition that we were concerned with was the one that said, and I mention a couple of the paragraphs of the preamble, that:

"Whereas the Liberal government's auto insurance legislation will provide enormous taxpayer subsidies to the private, corporate auto insurance industry, costing the Ontario taxpayer at least \$141 million in the first year alone;

"Whereas this legislation will deprive innocent injured victims of at least \$823 million in compensation that will be

denied them; whereas this insurance legislation will create a \$1 billion payday”—

You know, Mr Speaker, if we are going to do this, we are going to do it properly, and that means there should be a quorum here, and I would ask that the Speaker call on the Clerk, please, to determine whether there in fact is a quorum here. I am awfully disappointed in that.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

2009

Mr Kormos: That is better. Quite frankly, that is the way it should be. These people should stay in their seats and listen.

As I was saying, “Whereas this legislation will deprive”—my goodness, Mr Speaker, they all stayed in their seats—“innocent injured victims of at least \$823 million in compensation that will be denied them;

“Whereas this legislation will create a \$1 billion payday for the auto insurance industry at the expense of taxpayers, drivers and innocent injured victims”—these people will be forced to pay more and get less;

“Whereas the Premier and the Liberals have refused to listen to the hundreds of submissions made to them calling upon them to abandon this bad legislation;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Premier and his Liberal government end this sell-out of drivers, taxpayers and victims and that they immediately withdraw Bill 68.”

People from all over the province signed those petitions to be presented. Claudio Botticelli from Toronto signed. F. Bates signed. Dave Cook signed. Oh no, Mr Speaker, not the member for somewhere around Kitchener-Waterloo, not the Liberal. He did not sign it. He probably wanted to, because he likes his job. He does not want to have to worry about retirement. He wants to worry about whether he gets front bench or way in the back. That is his biggest concern. He would love to be able to enjoy the luxury of having to worry only about that.

But these people signed these petitions, praying that they would be heeded, with the hope that the Ministry of Financial Institutions—because as members know, that is how it happens. You submit a petition, you file a petition, you present a petition, and it goes to the respective ministry.

This is the problem with my position on this time allocation motion. This is why I persist in insisting that the motion be defeated. It has to be defeated.

Listen to the sort of garbage that the Ministry of Financial Institutions is saying to these petitioners. This is the response, this is the crummy response—You could drive a big car through the holes in this response. You are lucky if you can afford insurance on it. The holes in this response are pathetic. This is what the Minister of Financial Institutions has got to tell those people, and that is why we need debate.

I thought for a moment somebody was playing a prank on me, and so I looked at the second one, and indeed it was not a fake or forged response from the minister. This is the response he has attached to all of these petitions. No wonder he is not here to engage in debate about Bill 68. No wonder he proposes, through his House leader, time allocation motions. This is what he has to say to those people who would pray for relief from this crummy legislation. That is why now I move adjournment of the debate.

2047

The House divided on Mr Kormos’s motion, which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 9; nays 29.

Mr Kormos: You remember, Mr Speaker, we were talking about this time allocation motion in the context of the types of responses petitioners have been getting from the Minister of Financial Institutions. Are we ever going to see the Minister of Financial Institutions? Maybe he really is in the witness protection program somewhere in some small town in Saskatchewan.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Well, Alberta then.

Look what he has got by way of responses to petitioners. No wonder he does not want to show up for debate. There is another motion that is alive and well, and that is the motion that this House sit from six to twelve to debate this time allocation motion. The reason I objected to it at the time, and I never was permitted to finish arguing that one, was because I was insistent that the reason for that motion was so that good folks in their homes would not be able to watch what is going on on their cable TVs.

You know what, Mr Speaker? There are people watching this right now, as if they were in the gallery—because that is all those TV cameras are, an extension of those same public galleries that people are entitled to sit in—who do not understand what has happened. I am going to tell you, Mr Speaker, I have been talking now for around 26 hours. I have been talking now for around 26 hours on this time allocation motion, from 3 April to the present. Usually when people watch in the evenings, they see reruns of the afternoon. That is important to a whole lot of people because they are working in the afternoon and what have you.

An hon member: This is a rerun.

Mr Kormos: This is live. This is actually happening. It is around 12 minutes to nine o’clock at night. Here we are on Thursday live at Queen’s Park. I know the opposition is alive and well. The Liberal ranks—somebody should hold a mirror under some of their nostrils. We see them there, but we do not hear them. We see them.

But something happened a little while ago. Something happened a few weeks ago. That is to say that people started wanting to participate in what is happening here, just like these petitioners, who got such an incredibly absent response from the minister, wanted to participate. People learned that they could participate by using their telephones. But here we are at almost nine o’clock at night, and I do not know whether anybody is watching this. It could be that nobody is watching us.

Now if people were to telephone us at 965-1239—and I know that the member for York South is among the people answering the phones—they might get a chance to talk to the member for York South and they could tell him what they thought of him or the New Democrats or what have you. But they would also get a chance to tell the Liberals what they think of their trying to ram this legislation down the throats of the drivers, taxpayers and innocent victims of Ontario.

Seeing as how it is almost nine o’clock at night, I really want to hear from people who are watching this, if only to convince myself that in fact people are watching. I suppose if people are not watching, if there are no people in the galleries and if people leave the galleries, and that is where these

television cameras are, then I suppose I should sit down and let the next speaker in this debate take up his or her arguments. But if there are people watching and if they phone us at 965-1239—that is not the same number we gave out because my office staff is not there—we would dearly love to hear from them.

Let me tell you, Mr Speaker, what the Minister of Financial Institutions had to say to those good petitioners who tried to be a part of this process. That is why he wants to flee from debate about Bill 68. He wrote that, "The merits of the various options for insurance product reform were thoroughly investigated by the government in the creation of the Ontario motorist protection plan." That is just incredible—"various options."

At some point somebody is going to bring down my Osborne report, the grey Osborne report from my office, later this evening and we are going to take a look at what Mr Justice Osborne had to say about threshold insurance. The reason we are going to look at it is because that is exactly why the Liberals do not want to debate threshold insurance.

The fact is that some options were investigated by the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board—that is the Kruger board, John Kruger and his board—and that cost millions and millions of dollars of taxpayers' money. That board did look at some options and rejected them, including this one, including Bill 68, including the threshold system that we are being confronted with right now. Kruger and the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board in 1989 told this government, these Liberals, that the threshold system was not going to lower premiums and that it was going to create great injustice. That is from the government's own board.

I suppose there is nothing technically incorrect when the Minister of Financial Institutions says that the merits of the various options for insurance product reform were thoroughly investigated by the government. That is what the Minister of Financial Institutions says in reply to these petitioners. As I said, I suppose very technically that is correct, but what he omits to say is that the options were investigated and rejected. Do you see how much difference that makes, Mr Speaker? One concedes that yes, they were investigated, but they were rejected by the advisory board which this government had retained.

Through you, Mr Speaker, I want to gesture hello to the member for Willowdale, because I know that up in Willowdale people are concerned about what Bill 68 is going to do to them. People are concerned about the fact that the Liberal Party of Ontario is imposing closure on the opposition. I am glad the member for Willowdale is here. I know the member for Willowdale is a gutsy person. I say that sincerely. The member for Willowdale is the sort of person who enjoys his constituents. He likes his job, no two ways about it. He enjoys meeting them on weekends. He would be with his constituents here on Thursday night if the Liberals had not insisted on this matter carrying on this evening.

So be it. That is fine. I understand that. The Liberals are mad. The Liberals here at Queen's Park are just hopping. They were darn near bouncing off the walls. That is what you get for bouncing off the walls. If you bounce off the walls often enough, something sure as shooting is bound to happen to you.

The member for Willowdale is here. He is sitting here at nine o'clock at night. The member for Willowdale is sitting right here, when he could be at home with his family, when he could be out with his constituents, and I know he enjoys his constituents. The member for Willowdale has constituents who have been asking him to please vote against time allocation. The people up in Willowdale want to see matters fully debated.

The people from Willowdale sincerely believe that matters should be fully debated.

That is exactly what we are trying to convince these Liberals of here. Not only do we want to see the issues fully debated and this time allocation motion defeated, we want to see that happen, we want to see that people are paying attention out there across Ontario. We want them to call 965-1239 and let us know that. If it were within my power, I would have that number appear on the TV screen, 965-1239, but it is not. I know that good people who are listening will phone to say that they are listening and watching.

The member for Willowdale is here. Wow, this is incredible. Don Mills wants me to talk for a year. Notwithstanding that the Liberals have been afraid of that, it is not going to be quite a year. A friend from Port Perry has called 965-1239, an ex-director of Toronto-Peterborough Passengers to Oppose Via Rail. Here is a person who knows what it is like to be confronted by a government that does not listen, that does not care. Here is a person who took on the jackbooters from Ottawa.

An hon member: He used to be a Liberal too.

Mr Kormos: He was a Liberal and he will work hard to defeat them now.

From Port Perry, the ex-director of Toronto-Peterborough Passengers to Oppose Via Rail, thank you for calling us at 965-1239. I tell you, we are going to keep fighting the jackboots sitting over here in the Liberal ranks, the ones who want to eliminate debate, just like the good folks from Hamilton who say we are doing a great job. I thank you. It is people like you who give us a reason for doing as good a job as we try to do. When people like the people from St Catharines phone in and say they do not want Bill 68 and do not like what the Liberals are doing, I tell them we in the New Democratic Party do not like what the Liberals are doing either and we are going to fight it, because that is our job.

2100

There is not a fairminded person in this province who would not fight it, because fairminded people believe that there ought to be full debate, do they not? Fairminded people know there has to be full debate so that people can make a learned decision. Fairminded people do not make a statement like the Minister of Financial Institutions did that carries with it the deafening roar of silence about the fact that many committees considered the options and that they were all rejected.

Wilson Heights in Toronto, an ex-Liberal; Meaford, that is interesting writing; Don Mills; Oakville; Toronto—I tell you, Mr Speaker, people are listening right now and we are going to be here. We are here at nine o'clock in the evening on Thursday; we are going to be here at 10 pm on Thursday 26 April 1990; we are going to be here at midnight; we are going to be here at 1 am.

East York; Yorkview; Glen McDonald, Willowdale; Wayne Meddon from Pickering, 100 per cent support. Mr Moscattini hopes that his member for Yorkview is listening to what we are saying right here in the Legislature. These are folks who are calling 965-1239, and they are letting the people of this assembly know that it cannot draw the curtains on Queen's Park.

The Liberals here in Toronto cannot draw curtains, cannot build a wall around Queen's Park, cannot build a wall around this Legislative Assembly, no matter how much they would like to, no matter how much they would love to lock and bar those doors so that we could not even be here. They would love that. That would be the perfect Legislature for these Liberals, would

it not? It would be the perfect Legislature for the Liberals with their jackboots sitting here at Queen's Park, would it not?

Mr Mackenzie: And break some deals with you too while they are at it.

Mr Kormos: We know it. They would love to build a fence so high that nobody could ever get over it and so solid that nobody could ever see through it, right around Queen's Park, right here. Is that not what secrecy is all about? Is that not really what a time allocation motion is all about?

Mark from Thunder Bay called in. An ex-Liberal from Windsor called in. I tell you, Mr Speaker, these people are calling 965-1239. Don Clarke from Marathon on the Trans-Canada Highway. I have been there. I know where Marathon is. As a matter of fact, one of the times I was there, as I said before, I was coming back from working in the copper mines in Granisle, British Columbia, on Babine Lake. I worked in the Noranda copper mines on Babine Lake and was coming back after a summer of work in the mines. I was going to university and I went through Marathon.

As it was, I have never really understood. We have talked so many times to the Liberals—they do not listen to that either—about what the north is all about. The Trans-Canada Highway was washed out at Marathon, and my response was: "What do you mean it is washed out? How can that be? This is the Trans-Canada Highway." At that point in my life, I just did not have an appreciation of the fact that we are talking about a big province with a lot of remote territory. In the case of Marathon, it is basically serviced by that one highway. When the highway is washed out, you wait until it is fixed or you take that long northern detour, a 350- or 400-mile detour.

Don Clarke from Marathon calls in, and we appreciate that. These people are calling 965-1239. These people are telephoning into Queen's Park in Toronto, 416-965-1239. We appreciate your calls and we would appreciate more of them as the evening grows. Have your friends call, and if you visit the tavern later tonight, give that number to your friends in the tavern. If you are down in Welland, Mr Speaker, and going to the Station Hotel or the Crowland Hotel or the Devil's Den up on King Street or the Aqua-Duck or Gilligan's, tell them we would like to hear from them and would they please call us at 965-1239.

They will call and their friends will call and then rush your little bodies home, because you are going to be watching this debate on the Queen's Park parliamentary channel. Good Morning, America is going to be the choice people have in the morning—between the Queen's Park parliamentary channel and those American network stations that the cable companies insist on broadcasting. Good Morning, America. Well, good night to the Liberals, and so long, it's been good to know you, according to so many ex-Liberal members, including Liberal executive members. This is a remarkable and indeed revolutionary thing that is happening right now.

Steve Vance called. He has called before. He lives in a Liberal riding. He lives up in Barrie. He says that the MPP from that part of the province ought to take note. That is all we are asking, for the Liberals to listen to our arguments about time allocation. We are just asking for the Liberals to please take note.

Mr Speaker, I wonder if we might have water.

Mr R. F. Johnston: I am happy to provide you with some.

Mr Kormos: I appreciate that. Three cubes, please.

Steve Vance calls from Barrie. He called us at 416-965-1239 and you can too. We are looking forward to your call. I

have some more here. We are going to talk about them in a few minutes.

Mr Speaker, I want to talk to you about how the Minister of Financial Institutions is responding to people who petition this government to abandon Bill 68. That is why we are debating this time allocation. If we were confident that what the minister was telling them was accurate, we would say that is good enough. If we were confident there is nothing more that has to be said than what the ministry is telling people, my gosh, I would be on the highway heading back down to Welland-Thorold so fast tonight, short of exceeding the 100-kilometre-an-hour speed limit. You have got to be careful on the QEW because occasionally when you are doing 100, maybe 102 clicks, there is somebody behind you who is pushing you and trying to get you to go four or five kilometres an hour faster. I really resent that. I am most uncomfortable when that happens.

2110

Tom Finlay from High Park-Swansea was obviously watching earlier. Tom Finlay supports what we are doing in our opposition to Bill 68. He called 416-965-1239. Look what the Minister of Financial Institutions is telling people who petition. The minister's signature is on it. If this were a trial, the jury would be in by now.

An hon member: He would be hanging.

Mr Kormos: I have seen hanging juries. This is like a confession that Bill 68 is not what it is said to be, nothing akin to what it was supposed to be. Catch this, Mr Speaker. The Minister of Financial Institutions, above his own signature, and I know the minister's signature, writes, "Most of the recommendations"—look at the qualifier there, most—"respecting enhanced no-fault benefits for injured motorists made by Mr Justice Osborne, as well as his proposals for tort reform, have been incorporated into the plan."

That could, unless it is debated and made the subject of clarification, leave people with the impression that Mr Justice Osborne endorsed a threshold system. People think tort reform, threshold, deny people the right to use the courts. Oh, my goodness, did Mr Justice Osborne recommend that? You know he did not, Mr Speaker. If there is a member of this assembly who does not know, darn it, he ought to know or else he has not done a very good job of earning his paycheque the last couple of years. My goodness, the government spent millions of taxpayers' dollars on Mr Justice Osborne's inquiry, and Mr Justice Osborne—we are going to talk about that later.

This is it; this is the end of my speech about time allocation. When I am finished some time on Saturday or Sunday, I will have said all that I am going to be permitted to say on time allocation, and no more of these afternoons only. We are not talking about doing from three to six; we have clocked up around 25 or 26 hours now, but that is in a succession of afternoons. This is it. We are going for broke now.

Shana Sullivan from Stoney Creek—I wonder whose riding that is—supports us. Her son, Brendan, and husband also support us. Brendan Sullivan, young Brendan Sullivan, is listening to this right down in Stoney Creek as much as if he were sitting up here in the visitors' gallery at Queen's Park. Shana Sullivan, Brendan, her son, and her husband do not feel too favourably towards Liberals, especially Liberals who would try to gag and muzzle the opposition. These Liberals with their jackboots are trying to silence the opposition. They are trying to silence the opposition. They do not want a debate about Bill 68. They

appear to be just about ready to do anything they have to do to avoid it.

People like Andrew Marshall from East York, folks right here in Toronto should know that they can come right down here to Queen's Park right now at 9 or 9:15 at night and sit right up here in these members' galleries. That is what our parliamentary procedure is supposed to be all about, openness. The public in Toronto has a right to come right down here to Queen's Park. There is all sorts of parking on the north side of the building off Wellesley. Watch out for the BMWs and the Mercedes. That is the Liberal parking lot.

Which cabinet minister was it who went down to Scarborough to express sadness at the demise of the jobs of so many hundreds, indeed thousands, of GM auto workers? Which cabinet minister went down there, along with several other of the area MPPs to express great regret to the GM workers who were being forced out of jobs, hundreds and thousands down in Scarborough, and then drove away in his Honda Accord? Which Liberal cabinet minister was that? I know who it was and he knows who it was. Shame. That is what Liberals think about the public. That is why they do not want to debate Bill 68, because they have disdain for the public.

Come on, Mr Speaker. The same kind of Liberal who, as a cabinet minister, would go and sympathize with GM workers about to lose their jobs and then drive away in his Honda Accord is the same kind of cabinet minister, or ex-cabinet minister rather, who would try to persuade his fellow caucus members to support the insurance companies against the people of Ontario.

The problem with this reply by the minister is that Mr Justice Osborne did not endorse threshold insurance. Andrew Marshall in East York knows that; so does Mr Fazaro. Mr Fazaro from London, Ontario, knows that. The Liberals thought they could hide from the public of Ontario by extending these sittings into the evenings, did they not?

Mr Charlton: And now everybody is home watching.

Mr Kormos: The Liberals thought they could hide from the public of Ontario. The fact is, these TV cameras are bringing this live at 9:15 Thursday night, 26 April, into hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of homes across Ontario. Those people are listening, and they are mad.

Mike Perron from Welland has been trying to get through for 20 minutes, and he is going down to the Aqua-Duck Bar. Mike Perron, take a cab home. I tell you, Mr Speaker, people are watching, and they are calling 965-1239.

Bev Midland from Pickering calls in, and she understand what I am talking about when I am reading this reply by the Minister of Financial Institutions to the petitioners. She got a letter with the same—well, bullfeathers.

2120

Mr Charlton: And she says?

Mr Kormos: She did not say "bullfeathers." I know that people get irate about these things, but I bet Miss Midland has been on more than one farm and she knows what she is talking about. I bet those farms had cows and bulls on them and I bet she has walked barefoot and she knows exactly what she is talking about when she talks about the content of this kind of letter. She got the same thing from the Ministry of Financial Institutions when she wrote to it. She got the same sort of what I would call fluff, for the sake of methane avoidance.

People have got the same sort of fluff in their replies to concerns they expressed to Liberals as the minister has given in

his reply to a significant petition. The minister replies to this petition, and this is in his response to these thousands and thousands of petitioners across Ontario: "One of the key components of the plan is the new Ontario Insurance Commission." It is right here above the minister's signature.

Listen, you do not have to be a really serious student of English to take a look at what the minister is trying to do in his next statement. He says, "The commission will approve all insurance rates and classifications." You bet your boots they will approve them. They will approve every rate that any insurance company ever submits to them. That is what the commission is all about, the Liberals' new auto insurance commission.

David George from Don Mills wants to know what minister was driving the Honda Accord. I said, "A minister at the time, now no longer a minister."

An hon member: Which one?

Mr Kormos: There were a few. He is no longer a minister. He is a heck of a nice guy, were it not for the Honda Accord as he drove away.

My oh my, look what we have here. Look what rambles in through the portals of this place. We are getting closer and closer to a real Minister of Financial Institutions.

Mr Reville: Not very close.

Mr Kormos: Well, as real as our Minister of Financial Institutions here in this province is ever going to be.

So what have we got? We have an admission on the part of the Minister of Financial Institutions right here. I tell you, Gore Vidal's Hollywood is not the greatest book in the world.

An hon member: He writes better than you speak.

Mr Kormos: I am sceptical about whether he writes better than I speak and, quite frankly, I hope the minister bought it on the remainder tables because it is awfully close to that. I am disappointed that he would read fluff like that. I suppose if the ministries of the government are going to generate fluff, they have to ingest it. From fluff grows fluff, like this response to the petition.

You have a Minister of Financial Institutions who is acknowledging that all that his Ontario Insurance Commission is going to do is approve the insurance rates and classifications, baboom, baboom, baboom, rubber-stamp them. These guys wonder why we want to debate Bill 68. These guys actually scratch their heads, jaws slack, saying, "Why would they want to debate Bill 68?" Because of all this stuff that is being flushed out of the Minister of Financial Institutions' office.

The minister then goes on to say that because the commission will approve all insurance rates and classifications—this is in response to petitioners—this will result in savings being passed on to the consumer. The Ontario Insurance Commission will result in savings being passed on to the consumer. What a crock. What a pile of baloney.

The phone number is 965-1239. Joseph Camelare of Toronto voted Liberal for the last time and supports us in what we are doing. It is incredible. Virginia Robertson calls and she is going to get a reply because she asked for a reply, but she is opposed to this time allocation motion. She called us at 416-965-1239. What an opportunity for people to plug in to the parliamentary process. Teanna Brown calls from Brampton.

Mr Speaker, pay attention to what is being said. I am not being critical of you. I am just drawing your attention to what is happening here.

It is 9:30 in the evening of Thursday 26 April and people are watching this. The Liberals blew it again. The Liberals

thought that if they pulled this one off, that people would stop paying attention. Wrong. People are vitally concerned about what the Liberals in Ontario are doing to this province. People are vitally concerned about what the Liberals in Ontario are doing to this Legislative Assembly.

Teanna Brown from Brampton says no way to the Liberals and their jackboots. Teanna Brown is listening and her friends are listening. Her friends are going to be calling us. I do not know whether Teanna Brown is from Brampton or from some other part of the province, but Teanna Brown is going to be on the phone to her relatives. Teanna Brown is going to be on the phone to her schoolmates or her workmates, whatever the case may be, and she is going to tell them about telephoning 416-965-1239.

Teanna Brown is going to be calling her relatives, her friends, her workmates, be they in Brampton or anywhere else in Ontario, and telling them to phone in. You know what, Mr Speaker? If these people were not calling in, I would be sitting down. If these people were not calling in, this whole show would be over. If these people were not calling in to say that they support what we are doing, then why do it? Seriously and quite frankly, it is pretty hot and sweaty in here. It is pretty dank.

2130

Like I said before, I would love to be on the highway to Welland-Thorold. Then again, I know you are proud of the community you are from, Mr Speaker. I am proud of the people we have heard from across this whole province in the last three and a half or four weeks. I would love to be on the highway, to be back down in Welland-Thorold. The beagle is waiting for me. The beagle knows when it is Thursday night, honest to goodness. The beagle knows when it is Thursday night because that is when I get back into town. He ain't the youngest beagle any more, he ain't the best looking beagle any more and he got hung with a moniker like Charlie.

As I say, I would love to be at home with my feet up, patting the dog on the head, scratching him behind the ears. But we are here. We are here fighting the jackboot tactics of an arrogant majority. We are here fighting garbage like the stuff that is being flushed out of the Minister of Financial Institutions' office in response to good people in Ontario who want to petition this government to do something fair and something reasonable and something honest for once.

Teanna Brown from Brampton, I cannot tell you how much your phone call means to us. I cannot tell you, Mr Speaker, how much that phone call from Teanna Brown in Brampton means to me. I know the people in Welland-Thorold watch, because they say, "That's our member." But I tell you people in Brampton are watching, people in Brampton like Teanna Brown, who I know is going to be calling her friends, her relatives, her workmates.

Like Paul Bebella in St Catharines. Listen to what Paul Bebella has to say. Catch this. Paul Bebella called us up here just moments ago at 416-965-1239. Paul Bebella called up at 416-965-1239. We have people out there answering the phones right now. The member for York South has been helping out, and a whole lot of other members. I know it takes time to get through the lines, so I will tell you what I am going to do, Mr Speaker. There is a second number that can be called. If 965-1239 is busy—people should take a pencil. I know the members here will want to write these down.

The Acting Speaker: I feel like I am watching channel 17 or something. Where does it end with the phone numbers? I am

just feeling uncomfortable in terms of the approach that you are taking in terms of the discussion to the closure motion.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Mr Speaker, I think the point you raise is a very good point. I think perhaps it would be more appropriate if, rather than having the member for Welland-Thorold have to repeat that number or perhaps add additional numbers, someone could see to it that the number is put on the screen for people so that he would not have to interrupt the flow of his speech so much. Then he could just read out the thousands of letters coming from the member for Guelph's riding or the Minister of Community and Social Services' riding. I know that he would love to hear.

If you would rather they did not phone in, perhaps those in the Toronto area would like to come down tonight. We have many seats here in the theatre and would appreciate their attending. But I would just suggest that for the principle of wanting the public to be involved and have the opportunity to participate, I think an occasional reminder, perhaps less frequently than the member has done, would be appropriate.

Mr Fulton: Where are they going to put their donations?

Mr R. F. Johnston: We are not asking for donations. In fact, Mr Speaker, the interjection from the member for Scarborough East is an interesting one. I would suggest that what people are doing is spending their money to phone here because they are so angry.

The Acting Speaker: You see, I stood up to try to help matters along and all I have done is cause more difficulty for myself.

Mr R. F. Johnston: I am sorry. I thought that would be helpful.

The Acting Speaker: I think we will just forget the whole thing and let the honourable member for Welland-Thorold continue, except to be a little more—

Mr R. F. Johnston: Judicious.

The Acting Speaker: Judicious. Thank you.

Mr Kormos: With all respect, Mr Speaker, I appreciate what you are saying. Listen, if you think you are upset about these phone calls, these Liberals are just hopping. These Liberals are bouncing off the walls. You know what the message that is going out into those communities is? The message is that the Speaker does not want you to call in. The message that might be going out to people in Thunder Bay and North Bay—I was up in North Bay a Friday ago, great folks up in North Bay, really opposed to Bill 68. In Ottawa, in Kapuskasing, in Timiskaming, in Orangeville, in Newmarket, in Guelph, in Cambridge, in Kitchener-Waterloo, in Windsor, these people—remember the other day I had a map here of the province of Ontario? Mr Speaker, if somebody were to give me my map of the province of Ontario, I would show you where some of these fine people live. The page could pick up the map that is being offered to me, please, Mr Speaker.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Quite right. It is 9:35 at night and I am going to keep going until 9:35 in the morning. I tell members that right now. I just need people to phone in at area code 416-965-1239.

Mr Speaker, look what the Minister of Financial Institutions was doing when he answered these petitions. Get your pen, Mr Speaker, because if you have your pen and a piece of paper, the other number that can be called is 416-965-1224. The Speaker

is almost as nervous as the Liberals are about the people calling in. These people have a chance to fight back, they do, Mr Speaker. To the people who call 416-965-1224 or 416-965-1239, there are people waiting to answer their calls.

Jason, 11-year-old Jason: Listen. Jason is listening and Jason is concerned. Jason is scared out of his wits because in five more years he is going to have to be shopping for auto insurance. Jason, 11-year-old Jason, who phones in says, "Thank you for speaking for me and my friends." I say to Jason that we are not afraid to listen to 11-year-old Jason or his parents. We are not afraid of that, Mr Speaker. I tell you that. Jason calls in and he has every right to. He called in at 965-1239. Bless him.

Jim Ferguson from Ingersoll phoned in on the other line. He phoned in on area code 416-965-1224. Liberals are mad as hell that these people are phoning in. The Liberals are mad as all get out. The Liberals would love to shut this down right now, but no, they are going to be hoisted on their own petards.

You know what, Mr Speaker, if these folks like Teanna Brown in Brampton, Joseph Camilleri in Toronto, Bev Midland from Pickering, Shana Sullivan from Stoney Creek, Tom Finlay from Swansea, Steve Vance from Barrie—trust me, Mr Speaker. Erskine May does not say anything about closed-circuit cable TV, does not say anything about televised parliamentary proceedings.

2140

If the Liberals bit off more than they can chew, it is too bad, so sad, ain't it? The fact is it is a madhouse back there. The leader of the official opposition, the member for York South, who has been answering phones back there, comes back into this Legislative Assembly and says it is a madhouse back there where the phones are. I do not know whether he was answering 965-1239 or 965-1224, but he has been busy.

How can the Premier of Ontario let the Minister of Financial Institutions get away with this garbage in his letter, in his response to petitioners? How can it be that the Premier would let that take place? Did you read this, Mr. Speaker? I know I spent some time dealing with it with you and I am going to spend a little bit more time because it warrants that consideration.

The Minister of Financial Institutions dares to tell the petitioners that his insurance scheme will result in savings being passed on to the consumer. What savings? The same Minister of Financial Institutions who signed that has already told the province of Ontario that drivers are going to face premium increases of up to 50 per cent, and almost a third of a million of Ontario drivers are going to face premium increases of up to 80 per cent. We have learned that in the last week and a half.

The Minister of Financial Institutions himself has already promised that drivers in Ontario are going to face premium increases of up to 50 per cent, and then we find out but two weeks ago that a-third of a million drivers here in the province are going to face premium increases of up to 80 per cent.

Savings? There are no savings. Premiums are going to keep on going up and up and up. Premiums are going to keep on going higher and higher. More people are going to be forced out of their cars and off the roads. Do members know who some of the people are who are going to be hardest hit? Those folks watching in their homes, in their living rooms and rec rooms right now, they know—senior citizens.

Senior citizens are among those who are going to be paying the 80 per cent premium increases. We know that. The reason we know it is because some of the government's own people

have told us that. Don McKay, the general manager of the Facility Association, says that among others, among the other groups, senior citizens are going to be those people forced into the Facility Association. There is not a senior out there in Ontario who should not be scared out of his wits by the prospect of what Bill 68 is going to do to him.

You know, Mr Speaker, that this assembly usually shuts down at 6 pm and that is it. But here we are; it is 9:45 at night on Thursday, 26 April. These visitors' galleries are just waiting to have people come visit them. Now, I do not care if people just got home from getting their groceries—I suppose a whole bunch of people did; it is Thursday night—and maybe just had dinner. Subway it down here—there are no blackouts downtown tonight—or drive down here.

There is all sorts of parking on the north side of Queen's Park, off Wellesley, free parking, and they can come in here and watch what is going on here. They can be a live part of what is a debate and a fight for democracy and fairness. I mean, do you know what people have understood this to be? The fight against the goods and services tax in Ottawa—

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Perhaps this time I can be helpful. I know the member has mentioned a couple times, and once or twice at my interjection, that perhaps people should come down here to our galleries this evening. Although this would normally be an appropriate thing to do, we do not want to mislead the public about what is possible. In fact, we do not have the staff here this evening for people to be able to come down, and people should know that rather than this be presumed to be the case. Because it is clear that people outside this House are watching this, they should not be brought down here unnecessarily if they cannot get in. I think this is perhaps a helpful suggestion to the House.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Are you finished? Let's not worry about whether it is a point of order at this particular point in time. Let's think of the practical problems where someone indicated that the galleries are open, and lo and behold, actually they are not open. So I will repeat again—thank you to the member for Scarborough West—and remind everyone that in terms of what is available this evening, they will just have to tune in to their respective television stations, because it will be difficult to come into the chambers. The chambers are closed because of lack of staff because of this very interesting debate that is taking place. Hopefully that has cleared up that problem and we will allow the honourable member for Welland-Thorold, unless someone else has another point of order to that point of order, to continue.

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: In the past, in the days before we had the present rules, the House in the evenings was open, of course, for debate and people were allowed in.

Interjections.

Mr R. F. Johnston: This is a point of order, I think you will find. I am suggesting that if the House is to be open tonight and the principles of this place are to be maintained, that is, that this is a public place, we should not be proceeding unless the galleries are open and people can come down here and witness what is going on. It is a fundamental principle of this place that we do not sit in camera in this House, that this place is open for people to come to. Why is it that the government has not made arrangements for the galleries to be open to the public if it

thinks we should be sitting at night? One of the principles of this place is that this is a people's place where they can come down. So my point to you, Mr Speaker, is, how can we proceed when in fact we are now shutting the doors of this place?

The Acting Speaker: Have you made your point?

Mr R. F. Johnston: I think that was a point.

The Acting Speaker: Do you know what I just found out? Interestingly enough, individual members would still be allowed to have their constituents come in if they signed individual passes, to be seated in the members' guests gallery. So that being the case, we have a reasonable compromise. Although the guests' galleries are not available, at least members' passes are available for those fine constituents of all of us who would like to come in personally and listen to the debate taking place.

Mr R. F. Johnston: If I could ask for clarification on that, is it possible for you, for instance, as the member for Durham East to write out a slip for somebody who is not from your riding to come in? Because all the Liberal members from all the Metropolitan Toronto ridings are not here tonight, and I would not want people to come down and not be able to come in if the member for Scarborough East could not sign them in, as I will be suggesting he do.

The Acting Speaker: I can only respond to that in a practical nature. I have to admit that from time to time I have signed in guests of colleagues of mine. I do not know if that is covered under the standing orders or not but I have done it, so I guess if that is the precedent, other members would probably do it. They will have to take the responsibility, of course, for signing those members in. For instance, for someone who is coming from the Ottawa Valley tonight who would like to listen to the debate, the honourable member for Renfrew North is here. He could sign in for someone from that location, but we have the opportunity of having guests come in.

2150

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It is section 18 of the standing orders, if I might. I am wondering if the government has, by its own actions, decided that strangers shall be excluded from this House and from the galleries and has not used section 18, which is the only way we are allowed to clear the galleries, as I understand it. Why is it that people can only come in by invitation at this point, rather than being able to come into the public galleries, which is our tradition in this place, if this government feels we should sit at night?

The Acting Speaker: Order. I think I have been more than patient with the member for Scarborough West, who I have nothing but the utmost respect for, who has had the opportunity of sitting in various positions, as I have, in these august chambers. This is the third time you have stood up and, in my evaluation, the government, in terms of the administration, technically has not had any decision-making process in terms of what is available and not available in terms of the public gallery. It is a matter of staffing. The procedure that has taken place has been unusual. The Speaker's office—

Mr R. F. Johnston: It was clearly planned.

The Acting Speaker: That I cannot make a judgement on, but in terms of the administration of the building, such was not prepared for. Not that I am sticking up for either side. I am just telling you the way it is. We have done the best we could in the situation. I have listened to three points of order and I think we

should listen to the member for Welland-Thorold to see what he has to say.

Mr Kormos: Let me address this matter, albeit briefly, Mr Speaker. Listen. Our whole argument here is because the Liberals would stomp democracy into the ground. I tell you this is a public chamber. I tell you that one of the hallmarks of our parliamentary process is that it is not behind locked doors. Darn it, Mr Speaker, are you telling us that the Liberals are going to be permitted to finally do what I have suggested they might, in our worst dreams, do over the last three and a half weeks, lock the doors to this chamber? I say no. I say that the people of Ontario, the people who are right here in Toronto, should be exercising their right to be physically present at the operation of their Parliament.

Their phone calls say one thing, I tell you that, and I tell you this, Mr Speaker, their physical presence in this building—this debate is going to go on all night. This debate is going to go on well into the morning. We are here at eight minutes to ten on Thursday 26 April. This is live. This is not a replay in the evening.

I say to the people who are watching who are close by: "Get on your streetcar or your subway. We will be pleased to give you a member's pass. Bob Rae will sign your member's pass to get into the members' gallery. You come in through the east door and you can sit down and have a coffee, have a coke, have a ginger ale with Bob Rae and with other members of the New Democratic Party caucus." There are sandwiches for them. I say those people should be here watching this go on, because these Liberals have actually this evening tried to get away with what I only feared they would want to do. That is to lock the doors of this chamber. We cannot let that happen.

The Acting Speaker: I have a funny feeling that you are just crossing over the line a little too much with that, because we came up with the compromise that individual members are able to sign in constituents for themselves or on behalf of their colleagues. As I indicated, we were not, in terms of the Speaker's office, prepared for what was taking place. I am not, by any stretch of the imagination, defending the administration. I am defending the chair and I am just feeling a little uncomfortable that you are being critical and we are not able to be in a position. If I was seated in another place, I might have the opportunity, but I am not and I would like you to maybe divert some of your thoughts to another area.

Mr R. F. Johnston: If I might, on the comments that you just made, Mr Speaker, I agree with you that the compromise may seem to be a practical one for those people who do wish to come down. But think about the message that we are now sending out, and that is to say that a person from the public who wishes to come into this House—

Interjection.

Mr R. F. Johnston: This is not a debate. This is a comment on something I would like the Speaker to reflect on.

We are now saying that the only way you can in come here tonight, the only way you can reach these doors to come into your place which you control, the place that you have elected people to, is if a member of this House signs a piece of paper that says you can enter. That is our rule for the security in the lower part of this chamber; that is not our rule for the way things work in the public galleries. In general terms, people just have to go down and get a pass which they show to a person who is at door and they can walk in. They do not need the member for Renfrew North to sign that and say it is okay with

him if they enter. They do not need the okay of the member for Scarborough West for them to come in. They have the absolute right as citizens to sit in that gallery, unless they abuse this House by interjecting or by having some sort of display in that place.

I agree that what we are doing tonight is perhaps a practical compromise until something else is done, but I suggest to you, Mr Speaker, that the message is not acceptable and that some message from you in the chair should go to the administration that we expect, because this debate is going to go on all night, that some provision is made so people can come in here without having to go to the member from Lambton-Keegstra and suggest that he has the sole right to allow them to come in or not. They have the right to be here.

Mr Reville: On a point of order, Mr Speaker—

The Acting Speaker: What, have you got one now too?

Mr Reville: I certainly do.

The Acting Speaker: Is that on the same point? Is this going to help the problem?

Mr Reville: I think it may help the problem.

The Acting Speaker: I will try to listen. I am being most patient.

Mr Reville: If we do not solve this problem, we have a much more serious problem than you may realize. I was just talking to two people from High Park-Swansea who believe, as a result of this discussion, that they are somehow prevented from attending at the Legislature and watching this debate. They believe, after having listened to the discussion, that if you are from the Ottawa Valley, a member from the Ottawa Valley would have to sign you in here, which of course might be true if we were going to talk about the members' gallery. But there is a public gallery. This is a Legislature in a democracy, the last time I looked. I am concerned that people feel they may not attend at their Legislature and I would like a clarification of that.

Mr B. Rae: On the same point, Mr Speaker—

The Acting Speaker: It better be good.

Mr B. Rae: —I am just curious as to what the authority is for the galleries to be closed. The assumption of the House is that when the House is in session the galleries are open. I am just curious as to the rule or authority under which the galleries have been closed. I cannot think of any clear precedent for it and I am just curious, sir, as to what the authority for that ruling is.

The Acting Speaker: The leader of the official opposition knows full well—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Scarborough West, let's try to resolve this.

The leader of the official opposition knows full well that I have nothing but the highest regard for him and his capabilities. I have to be very stern about this. It boils down to a practical problem of security.

Interjection.

2200

The Acting Speaker: I know. You look about and you wonder about the security, but there have been other instances

in other places. Practically, the security is not in the manner we have been accustomed to during the normal course of sitting hours. The best I can do, and I am going to rule very strictly on this, is that there was some provision for members to sign in constituents. Tomorrow—is it already tomorrow yet? No, it is not tomorrow yet. However this discussion continues and resolves, there should be further discussion among respective House leaders and party leaders to resolve the security problem. I am going to centre in on the security for members of the assembly, which I feel very strongly is the responsibility of Speaker's office.

Mr B. Rae: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: If I may, the government House leader is responsible for having moved the extension of the hours at six o'clock without any notification; in fact, as will become very clear, directly contrary to every understanding that was reached with respect to the conduct of business this week after much discussion. So we on this side can say with some degree of clarity that there is clear responsibility on the government's side for the fact that, without precedent, debate has been extended tonight and that, Mr Speaker, I say to you, sitting in your chair, it is hard for me to imagine a Speaker of this assembly wanting to go down as the Speaker who said that the public of Ontario could not come in and watch the debate, the debate which the government itself has required.

We are here tonight for one reason only. We are here tonight because the government House leader moved a motion extending the hours of the debate on this particular motion, without any warning to us whatsoever, at six o'clock on a Thursday evening, knowing full well that everyone on this side was working on the basic understanding, because that is the understanding we had from the government House leader, that today we would be debating the question of the budget and that debate would conclude at six o'clock, as it normally does, and would resume again next week on the agreement of the House leaders. If the government wants to run the House in some other way, which it is clear that it does, all I can say to it is that it owes at least to the public of Ontario the continued right to attend at this assembly, and I say to you, sir, that any Speaker who rules that the public is not welcome in the Legislature of Ontario had better think again.

Hon Mr Ward: Some suggestion has been made that perhaps the galleries have been closed as a result of direction from the government. I want to disabuse everyone of that notion. Frankly, as far as the government is concerned, if arrangement can be made for security—and I understand that is totally within your purview, Mr Speaker—we will do anything we can to help or assist.

The Acting Speaker: Well, you know what? You have just helped me a great deal because I am very sensitive to the honourable leader of the official opposition, having had the opportunity of travelling with him to Lithuania on the back of the bus from Vilnius to Kaunas, and indeed myself, just returning back from the first free vote in Croatia. Far be it from me to limit access of the people of Ontario to the public gallery. So I will turn over that decision to members of the House. Is there now general agreement, as indicated by the government House leader, that if the arrangement—

An hon member: It's your responsibility.

The Acting Speaker: Oh no, I am throwing it back to members of the House. Are you in your seat, by the way? No. If you want to interject, get in your seat.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Do not tempt me, because I just might.

I will leave this decision to all the members. Is there an agreement, at best and as quickly as possible that security can be obtained, to then allow the galleries to be open within a reasonable length of time?

Agreed to.

Mr Kormos: I am sorry to have generated, I guess, some of the—I hope it was not ill feeling. All I can tell you, Mr Speaker, is that we feel strongly about this being a public process. I think that is so important. I know you do too, Mr Speaker. I was concerned because I know that FAIR is an organization that has worked very hard fighting this legislation and I know that there are members of FAIR right here in Toronto who, when they find out that this is the last chance I am going to have to speak on this motion, would want to come down here and see it.

FAIR is mostly lawyers—

An hon member: But not all.

Mr Kormos: —but not all; head injury people, doctors, all sorts of people. I know that FAIR people who are watching would want to drive down here to Queen's Park and watch this. I know that their friends would phone them at their homes and say: "Look, do you see what's happening at Queen's Park? Will you please go down there and help the opposition fight for fairness?"

We think FAIR and its members should be able to see this final stage of our initial submission on this time allocation motion. We really believe that. So I am hoping that at this late hour, at 11 o'clock, of this marathon, if you will, people will come down here after their dinners, before they go home to bed, to watch what is happening. I know that the lawyers who have been so actively and fervently involved in this fight against bad legislation will want to come down here and watch this. I pray that they do.

You know who called in, Mr Speaker? Belinda Anderson called in from Welland. She is at home with her husband, Bob. She called in to say that she is pleased with what the opposition is doing. I cannot tell you how much it warms my heart for Belinda to call in. I am not saying this is fun. I am not saying I am not tired. I would love to go home and go to bed. I would love to sit down and put my feet up in front of the TV. But I believe in this fight. I believe that if people call 965-1224 and let us know how they feel, then we can have the energy to carry on this particular debate. That is why Belinda Anderson knew how to call.

Mr Speaker, I told you the other day, and I read the newspaper clipping to you, that the town of Georgina has passed a resolution opposing Bill 68. You want to know something, Mr Speaker? There was one councillor, Bill Laird, who spoke against it. He is an insurance broker. Bill Laird spoke against the resolution of the town of Georgina.

My goodness, Bill Northmore is watching. He called in from Mississauga. I wish he would come down here and see this for himself. The member for York South will sign a member's slip to get him into the members' gallery to watch. Bill Northmore from Mississauga says he supports everything we are doing: "It becomes clearer and clearer that the Liberals are running a dictatorship."

Dale Woods from Oshawa is watching right now. He says, "The Liberals should realize who put them there and that they

will not be there again." Dale Woods from Oshawa understands that.

I am going to get back to the town of Georgina. What happened in the town of Georgina—and Dale Woods in Oshawa, Belinda Anderson in Welland and Bill Northmore in Mississauga know this—is the little town of Georgina did not have closure when it discussed Bill 68, did it? The town of Georgina had a full debate. These are good, hardworking folk, who again had better things to do than spend all evening at a town council meeting. There was opposition because there was an insurance broker—not hard to believe, is it?—who tried to persuade them to support Bill 68, but no, the majority said, "No way." Indeed, one councillor in the town of Georgina said, "Look, if the government really wanted to look at options it would start looking at public auto insurance."

An hon member: In Georgina they said that?

Mr Kormos: In the town of Georgina they said that.

The town of Georgina does not have closure motions. How is it that some people here can say that is okay at Queen's Park? Is that what prompts Bill Northmore from Mississauga to say the Liberals are running a dictatorship? I am fearful that it is.

2210

John McLaughlin from Toronto called in to say that this is not a good bill and that he supports us.

Joe Sullivan from Hamilton calls in and supports our efforts. He was a Liberal, but he says he will never vote Liberal again. Joe Sullivan knows there is a time allocation motion that the Liberals are trying to force on us right now. What is the time allocation motion all about? It is about denying the opposition the opportunity to do its job. It is about telling the opposition, "Be silent." It is about telling the opposition that the interests of the wealthy, powerful insurance industry should overwhelm and override the interests of drivers and taxpayers and innocent injured victims. That is what is happening. Joe Sullivan from Hamilton does not want time allocation. He does not want closure. There is the phone ringing; I just heard that door open and that phone is ringing. Joe Sullivan from Hamilton wants to see the Liberals vote against this time allocation motion.

What Mary Chatterton—four drivers in her family—out in Guelph characterizes or illustrates for us is that insurance companies cannot vote. Oh, they can pay out the bucks at election time. They can make the big, greasy donations at election time, can they not? But they cannot vote; drivers can. Mr Speaker, time and time again I have reminded you that these Liberals have received big campaign contributions. In the last general election, over \$100,000 was paid by the insurance industry to the Liberals as campaign contributions. You are not talking about \$5 and \$10 and \$20 bills.

More phone messages: Lori Moore from Oriole riding; is it not great that she would be watching what is going on right now, paying attention? Lori Moore is afraid about what the Liberals are doing to this Legislature with their time allocation motion. Lori Moore from Oriole riding calls in and says, "Keep fighting." It is because Lori Moore phones us that I am going to be here not just at 10 after 10, because that is what time it is right now, but I am going to be here at 10 after 12, I am going to be here at 10 after two in the morning, I am going to be here after MTV signs off the air, so you might as well switch to the cable parliamentary channel.

We are going to be fighting this time allocation motion. How could any of us go home and face our constituents if we did not fight this time allocation motion? How could we? This

is not just closure of the opposition; it is closure of the public of Ontario. Because what is happening now is that thousands of people in Ontario are witnesses to this effort on the part of the Liberals to shut down debate. You know what they are calling it? They are calling the Liberals the federal Tories of Queen's Park, because this time allocation motion is all about what the federal Conservatives do, what Brian Mulroney does.

Mr Burns from Bradford called. He missed the hockey game so that he could witness what was happening here. Mr Burns believes that the public should be able to see this. God bless you, Mr Burns in Bradford. There are some Liberals here who may laugh at you, Mr Burns, but I tell you it is your energy and your enthusiasm, and that of thousands of people like Mr Burns, that keeps me going.

The town of Georgina did not impose closure up in that part of Ontario. That makes it now eight out of nine local municipalities up north of Toronto here that have passed resolutions against Bill 68, and in not one of those municipalities was there a closure motion. You know what, Mr Speaker? They had full, open, thorough debate in each and every one of those municipalities. It is true. Those municipalities, like Georgina and eight others in the area, permitted debate. I said to you before and I say to you again, if city councillors in good, healthy, small communities can and should have debates, should we not right here in Queen's Park?

The region of York council and the York Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board have both passed resolutions against Bill 68. They had full debate. They did not have closure. Oh, no. Up in Elliot Lake, where the seniors are watching right now, the seniors are phoning in. Oh yes, the seniors in Elliot Lake have seen a whole lot. They have seen this government, these Liberals, let jobs be taken away from miners, hardworking people, with no options. The people in Elliot Lake are sick and tired of a government that will force its will on them without open debate. They are opposed to the time allocation motion.

Laurie and John Lafontaine—they are from Ottawa, but they are visiting in Toronto tonight—say people in Ottawa do not like Bill 68. They sort of plan on coming down here, getting into the members' gallery, having the Leader of the Opposition or any other member sign a slip for them so they can get into the members' gallery and watch this all night. Well, they are welcome. That is the way it should be.

Now we are starting to get somewhere. Phil Bagnall from Welland says we are doing a great job, "Relax and loosen up your tie." Listen, Mr Speaker, we have got to talk about time allocation for a whole lot. I am going to loosen up my tie around 1 am.

Georgina had full, open debate. The region of York council had full, open debate and York Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board had full, open debate, and yet the Liberals will not let us have full, open debate here at Queen's Park. Those boards and councils have all passed resolutions against Bill 68 after full, open debate. In the case of the York Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board, it sent that resolution along to school boards across Ontario, asking them to look at it and do the same.

I got a copy of a letter to the Minister of Community and Social Services, written to him in Aurora.

2220

The Tieche family phoned in from Thorold. They say the Liberals can stuff Bill 68. That is what the Tieches say.

Vince Ragona just phoned us. Mr Speaker, if only that phone could be brought in here; these people want to be able to

talk to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Vince Ragona of North York says: "It is about time somebody told the Liberals where to get off. Happy somebody is finally standing up."

Mr Weber down in Welland phones in with his support. Everybody in this assembly should be thankful to people like Mr Weber, because Mr Weber, just like the folks in Georgina, does not believe in closure. Mr Weber down in Welland, he will not buy closure from the Tories at Parliament Hill, nor will Tom and Joanne Jenkins in Welland.

Tom and Joanne Jenkins down in Welland will not tolerate closure when it comes from the Tories and Brian Mulroney because they want to ram through the GST up in Ottawa. Tom and Joanne Jenkins believe strongly enough about democracy and about our political system that they will not buy closure from the Liberals here in Queen's Park when the Liberals want to ram through Bill 68. What the GST is to Mulroney, Bill 68 is to the Premier of Ontario. Mark my words. Tom and Joanne Jenkins know that. They called in this evening to say so.

I got a letter from Newmarket—and once again, I am telling you, from a lawyer and this is a concern about Bill 68 that we in the New Democratic Party share with this lawyer, and he is D. W. Monteith.

Ange Topping and her husband from Niagara Falls voted Liberal, but they cannot afford any more premium increases. This is what we want to talk to the Minister of Financial Institutions about. People like Ange Topping and her husband in Niagara Falls cannot afford any more premium increases. Yet the Minister of Financial Institutions would tell the press, and you heard it too, Mr Speaker that for drivers in this province, once Bill 68 is passed—and Lord knows the Liberals want that bill passed; so do the insurance companies—premiums are going to go up by as much as up to 50 per cent. Ange Topping and her husband in Niagara Falls know that, and they say they cannot afford premium increases of up to 50 per cent.

I hope they are not among that group of almost one third of a million drivers here in Ontario—you know what I am talking about now, Mr Speaker—who are going to face premium increases of up to 80 per cent if Bill 68 becomes law. People do not deserve treatment like that, do they?

Yvon Dupont of Dupont Painting in Welland, all 10 of them are watching. I know Dupont Painting; they are a heck of a painting company. Yvon Dupont and his friends have got their heads on straight, because they will not tolerate closure either.

The concern that was raised by Mr Monteith, and he is a lawyer—is it wrong for lawyers to raise concerns about flaws in legislation? Is it wrong for personal injury lawyers who work with injured victims day after day after day, who see the catastrophes, to raise concerns?

Scott Isapon calls in and says our time will be long remembered, Bill 68 will not be forgotten either. I know I am so thankful to Scott Isapon and Yvon Dupont and Scott's family and Yvon's friends for listening and for sending in their comments, Mr Speaker, because I do want you to know that it is simply an impossibility for me to keep talking for ever. There are no two ways about that. It is impossible for me to talk for ever. What I can do in the next, let's say, 20 hours is going to be the last chance I have to persuade the Liberals to vote against this time allocation motion, the one that their very own House leader proposed, and I do not know whether my strength will permit me to last 20 hours.

But I tell you, Mr Speaker, the Liberals have raised the price of poker, if you will. They have suspended the rules, because no longer do we debate until six in the afternoon; now they have said, "Okay, we'll use our majority to suspend the

time rules of the Legislative Assembly." That is what they have done. They have suspended the time rules of the Legislative Assembly.

The minute I sit down, the minute I lose the floor, there is no more second chance. This is my last chance to persuade the Liberals here that what they are doing is dreadfully, dreadfully wrong. This is my last chance, and I do not know whether I have the strength to last 20 hours.

I am so thankful to the people who have shown their support for our position, and it is because of them that I have been able to last this long. As long as my legs will keep me upright and as long as my voice will keep on working, I am going to use every second of this opportunity. I am going to treat it jealously because it is my last chance, but there is so much at stake that I am going to use every second of it to do my best.

I appreciate that there are better speakers than I am. Oh yes, there are people who have got more eloquence than I do, for sure, and there are people who are more persuasive and more effective when they talk; I know that. I grew up in a small town. I grew up in Welland with good people. I was raised by immigrant parents who worked hard and did their best, and I am lucky for everything I have been blessed with. I am talking about the quality of life that my family provided for me, with hard work, the schooling that I managed to have. But I did not go to Harvard or Oxford universities or stuff like that, and I did not get big scholarships. When I went to university I worked in a Canadian Tire store 40 hours a week and then I figured myself lucky to get a job at a gas bar on the weekend. So I am not no slick orator and there is a whole bunch of people in this House who could be a lot more slick than I am.

But the fact is that right now it is my job, it is my responsibility to all the people here in Ontario—I really believe that it is my responsibility—to persuade the people in the province that we are doing everything we possibly can to prevent this time allocation motion from becoming a reality.

2230

You know what happens if this motion passes is not just a last argument; it is no argument. That is what happens. If this time closure motion passes, then there is no more argument; it is finished. If this time closure, time allocation, guillotine motion passes, you have snuffed out democracy here in Ontario. You have given this assembly lock, stock and barrel over to the Liberals and their friends in the auto insurance industry. That is what happens. If this closure motion passes, there is no more debate, there is no more discussion. This is my last chance.

Mr Speaker, it is 10:30 in the evening now on Thursday 26 April, and there have been enough phone calls and enough people coming down here to Queen's Park, sitting right here in this members' gallery, to make me want to go on till 12:30 or maybe 1:30. A few more phone calls, a few more people down here at Queen's Park and I may be able to argue till 7:30, 8:30, 9:30, 10:30 in the morning. If there is enough support across Ontario for what we are doing right now, we can go for ever.

Ron Alexander from Newmarket says, "Keep it up and maybe democracy will work." That is what we are fighting for. We are fighting for democracy. Why will the Liberals at Queen's Park not listen to the Ron Alexanders of Newmarket? Why? Why was it that when people tried to telephone the Premier of Ontario last week, the Premier was not taking their calls?

When the president of Allstate phones up the Premier's office, or the president of Co-operators, or the president of Scottish and York—those are all big auto insurance com-

panies—when they phone up the Premier's office, the Premier gets on the phone, does he not? You bet your boots he does.

Why? Because if Ron Alexander is inclined to provide a political donation—well, to any number of political parties—I mean, Ron Alexander is a working guy; it might be \$5, \$10, \$20. But when Co-operators or Royal Insurance or Scottish and York make contributions to the Liberals, you are talking about contributions in the last general election in excess of \$100,000 by the auto insurance industry in this province to the Liberals sitting here at Queen's Park and their fellow candidates in the last general election.

John Cowell in Welland phones up and talks about the Liberal dictatorship right here at Queen's Park. John Cowell says the people are going to remember, and the people are.

Melody Grenville from Alcona Beach called up and said: "This is ludicrous. The Liberals should stop trying to fool the people."

Joe Olsiak from Fort Erie calls up and says, "Don't stop." Mr Speaker, we have got a whole lot of stuff to talk about during our consideration of this time allocation motion.

Sandra Richardson from Windsor phones, and her husband has been in a serious accident. She is still fighting for compensation. She shudders to think what would have happened under Bill 68. She lives in a Liberal member's riding. I can tell you, without naming the member, who that is. They keep moving these folks around. The Liberals keep shuffling around. Sandra Richardson from Windsor lives in a Liberal member's riding and she says: "Last time, pal. Make retirement plans."

Elaine and Ken Forsythe in St Thomas phoned. I suppose if one were to condense our argument, one would say exactly what Elaine and Ken Forsythe from St Thomas say: "If it is such a good bill, why do the Liberals not let a real debate happen?" Enough said.

London folk have been calling for 90 minutes trying to get through to wish us well in the opposition we have to this time allocation motion.

Don Hotte from Welland has five drivers in his family. This is why we need a debate about Bill 68. These folks know. Don Hotte's family pays over \$5,000 a year in auto insurance premiums. It is not because they are bad drivers. It is not because they are careless drivers. The Hotte family are not reckless or drunken drivers.

The member for Guelph might want to tell Don Hotte what it means when you are paying over \$5,000 a year in premiums now, if you are one of those people who face premium increases of up to 50 per cent after Bill 68 has passed. What if you are one of the almost one third of a million people who face premium increases of up to 80 per cent?

I do not care who you are; I do not care where you work—the Premier of Ontario is a millionaire. Premium increases do not particularly concern him. He is the worst kind of millionaire. He did not earn it; he inherited it. He does not worry a whole lot about premium increases.

Don Hotte and his family from Welland care, because they work too hard, quite frankly, for far less than what they deserve as hardworking people. Don Hotte and his family care about premium increases and they are opposed to this closure motion.

Richmond Hill, an employee of Allstate Insurance, just called in and agrees with our effort. He knows that we are right about Bill 68. What better source?

Do you understand, Mr Speaker? The Liberal House leader moved a time allocation motion. The Liberal House leader, back on 3 April, interrupted the commencement of the discussion about Bill 68 to move his time allocation motion, and that

is closure. That is what Brian Mulroney and the Tories do in Parliament when they want to get the goods and services tax rammed through. That is closure. Do members want to know what? That is what the Liberals at Queen's Park do when they want to ram Bill 68 through.

We say no to closure. We say no to locking the doors of this assembly. We say no to that. I have pleaded with the Liberal House leader to withdraw Bill 68. The minute the Liberal House leader withdraws Bill 68 I have nothing more to talk about. But he will not withdraw it. If he withdrew his time allocation motion, I would have no more debating to do.

2240

We are talking here at about 10:30 at night and we have visitors here in this House. We have members of the public who came down here to Queen's Park to see what is happening. We have members of the public who, I tell you, are afraid. They have better things to do on Thursday night at 10:30, do they not? They have far better things to do, but they are afraid about the future of democracy and they are afraid for what Bill 68, if it is permitted to pass, is going to do for taxpayers, innocent injured victims and drivers.

Fred Green from St Catharines is a poet and it is much appreciated.

Roy and Lori Green from St Catharines are too far away to sit up here in these galleries like these good folks, but their windows to Queen's Park are in these television cameras and Roy and Lori Green from St Catharines are watching what is happening and they are witnesses to what is happening. They are witnesses to a debate about democracy.

Roy and Lori Green know that, and so do the people in Georgina, just like Robert Magnus does in Penetanguishene. Robert Magnus, senior citizen, is a Second World War veteran. Veterans who fought for democracy, who fought for freedom, who risked their lives, know what closure motions are all about; they know how important it is to maintain parliamentary traditions.

Robert Magnus from Penetang, Second World War veteran, senior citizen, he knows what it means to see the jackboots stamping out democracy, snuffing out free debate, does he not? He never said so, but I bet you Robert Magnus has voted for one or two Liberals in his lifetime. And we know that people voted for the Liberals back in 1987 because they brought enough members with them to Queen's Park, did they not? We know that, but the sad thing for those same Liberals is that people like Robert Magnus from Penetang, and all the hundreds of others who have been phoning here in the last two or three hours, plugging these phone lines, are saying, "Never again, not when the Liberals showed such disdain for the public, for the taxpayer, for the driver, for the innocent injured accident victim."

Let me get back to what Mr Monteith from Newmarket was telling me about in his letter. He was not really telling me, he was trying to tell his MPP, from Aurora, a Liberal.

The member for York North, a cabinet minister, a person of influence—not a whole lot because, after all, you have the insurance companies there—a person of some influence, the member for York North—there are the phones. Is this not exciting? It is almost 11 o'clock at night and people are phoning in; people are down here in the galleries. I think if enough people were here and if enough bodies were right here in this building—

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Rob Whiteman, I have to tell you, is my next-door neighbour down on Bald Street in Welland, Rob and Sherry. Rob works at the tube plant, Page-Hersey. Rob knows what it is like to work hard. Rob works his butt off and then Page-Hersey says, "Sorry pal, we are going to lay you off for a month or two." That is the sort of working conditions Rob has to cope with and he copes real well. He works real hard. When he is laid off, he is always out there looking for other work because Rob is about as responsible a person as you could ever find.

Sherry, his spouse, is just a delightful person. They are wonderful people and they are a hardworking young couple. They are part of what makes it so nice for me to live on Bald Street, the corner of Bald and Denistoun in Welland, a big 80-year-old brick house with big maple trees in front, big verandas both front and back. It is the kind of neighbourhood where, in the summertime, you sit out on your porch on a Saturday afternoon reading the Star with all its sections and the neighbours drop by and pick up the sports section or the entertainment section. We have the kind of lawn chairs that have the canvas backs on them, the ones that I grew up with back in the 1950s that you can still pick up down on Queen Street West. The people down on Bald Street look out for each other. They care about each other. We all know each other by first names and we think nothing of dropping by to say howdy. We think nothing of dropping by each other's homes on a cold winter day, on a Sunday afternoon or a Saturday evening, for hot chocolate or howdy. We think nothing of doing that.

Rob and Sherry Whiteman phone in to say, "Thank the New Democratic Party for exposing this awful legislation." We are here because of the Rob and Sherry Whitemans; we are not here because of the Allstates and the Co-operators and the Scottish and Yorks. If I have to stay here until 7:30 in the morning to try to make sure that Rob Whiteman is not forced off the road because of unaffordable insurance premiums, darn it, I am going to stay right here. Just watch me.

Mr Speaker, I have told you more than half a dozen times now about how there are a whole lot of Liberals who ought to be looking to retirement. The future member for Scarborough-Ellesmere is sitting right here in the members' gallery. David Warner is right there with his family and I tell you, the people in Scarborough-Ellesmere are not going to forget what their Liberal member is doing to them when he continues to support this time allocation motion, this closure motion. It is not a Liberal invention. It is a Brian Mulroney invention and the Liberals are adopting it.

Do you want to know something? Liberals are Tories too. Every day that we see the Liberals here at Queen's Park with their jackboot tactics, we have come to realize that more and more. So you see, David Warner, the future MPP for Scarborough-Ellesmere—I will bet you dollars to doughnuts that he is going to run again and I know that he is going to be the member. Why? Because the people in Scarborough-Ellesmere, watching right now, know that the Liberal Party of Ontario is prepared to sell them out and indeed is doing it in exchange for the wealthy interests of a powerful insurance industry.

2250

How many times do I have to tell you this, Mr Speaker? Listen to this. There is no secret about it. The Liberals get money from insurance companies. Over \$100,000 was recorded in the last general election, plus hundreds of thousands of dollars in third party advertising. This is no secret either, that trade unionists and trade unions—and I am so grateful to them—were

very active in their support in our by-election down in Welland-Thorold. I cannot think of a New Democratic Party member who has not been so blessed and graced.

David Grimaldi from Windsor expresses high thanks for sticking up for the rights of the average person in Ontario. "I think it is a sad day in our history when a government takes advantage of an individual the way they have taken advantage of me." God bless you, Dave Grimaldi. They are trying to take advantage of him, but that is okay, because you care so much about the average person.

I just wonder how members of the government would feel if one of their loved ones suffer because of this bill. They would have to carry the guilt that they were part of the process that rammed this bill through the House. "Try to find the inner strength to go on. Fight for democracy and our rights."

Dave Warner called in on the telephone line 416-965-1224. There are all sorts of good folk there to answer it. The member for York South, the leader of the New Democratic Party, was down there answering the phone. A whole bunch of other New Democratic Party members are answering the phone. If it were not for people calling 965-1224, I would have had to sit down a long time ago—honest.

Florence Chase from Welland phoned in to say that she supports our opposition. Florence Chase in Welland knows that this time allocation motion is wrong.

Mike Mann from North Toronto has been trying to call for three hours. He finally got through at 965-1224. Mike Mann, come on down to Queen's Park because we are going to be here all night and we are going to be here all morning. You know that, do you not, Mr Speaker?

Mike Mann worked all his life and finally bought his dream, a 1989 Corvette made by General Motors workers, big parts of it manufactured right here in Canada. We are not talking about the ex-cabinet minister who went down to Scarborough to commiserate with the GM workers who were being told that—what, 1,000 or 2,000 were going to lose their jobs?—2,300 GM workers in Scarborough were bumped, tossed out, told of a pending layoff that is going to be permanent. A Liberal cabinet minister shows up to commiserate and drives off in his Honda Accord. Thanks a lot, pal, thanks loads. Honda Accord be damned.

Mike Mann from North Toronto works all his life to buy his dream car and let me tell you, I know a little bit about Corvettes. I read some of the Corvette books and magazines and I tell you, they are fine cars. It is no secret that I drive one. I have just about the best. Cathy Robertson down at Brian Chev-Olds in Welland, and Cathy Robertson is about the greatest person you could ever meet. Cathy, I tell you, has told me frequently over the last month and a half how she supports our opposition to Bill 68 and to the time allocation motion.

This guy is mad. He has finally been able to buy this dream car of his. It is not new, it is used. Mike Mann feels he is being used by the Liberals here at Queen's Park now. He knows that the Liberals are ready to sell him out so that the insurance companies can make unheard-of, unprecedented profits. We have got folks up here in the visitors' gallery who are witnessing what is happening right here on this time allocation motion.

We are talking about thousands of phone calls; we are talking about people calling 965-1224. We are talking about people coming down here because of what is happening here, because this is so important. I told you just a few minutes ago, this is my last chance, Mr Speaker. Thank you. More phone messages.

A New Democrat school trustee, Beare Weatherup, is in the public gallery right now with his wife, Suzanne, and his daughter. Beare and Suzanne and daughter—

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, I am ready to take whatever guidance and direction you are prepared to give me.

Let's talk about Lucy Gunther and Scott Sauer from Welland. They are behind this all the way. Why are the Liberals not listening to them? Do you want to know why, Mr Speaker? It is because they are not millionaires, they are just hard-working folks. Why are the Liberals not listening to Lucy Gunther and Scott Sauer? Because they do not own insurance companies and they do not make \$100,000-contributions to Liberal campaigns in general elections. Lucy Gunther and Scott Sauer are just plain hard-working people who deserve a heck of a lot better than what these Liberals are giving to them right now.

It is obvious that the Liberals and the Tories are both the same. Remember that I have been telling you that for weeks and weeks and weeks now, Mr Speaker. Liberals are Tories too.

Charles Ng from Mississauga is voting New Democrat in the next election because he knows New Democrats are not beholden to the auto insurance industry.

Jacques Winona, or Jacques from Winona—the folks back there are so busy, so rushed—all he says is: "You're right. All the money I pay, I need food vouchers."

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Sure, you are darned right. David Warner, the ex-member for Scarborough-Ellesmere, came down tonight and he knows. Do you want to know something, Mr Speaker? Guys like Dave Warner do not get money from insurance companies. There are just no two ways about it.

Dave Warner does not take money from insurance companies. Heck, I bet they do not even offer it to him. Guys like Dave Warner and the rest of us here in the New Democratic caucus are not at all concerned because we do not want to be beholden to the insurance companies.

I started to tell you before, Mr Speaker, that I and all the rest of us here in the opposition get money from trade unions and trade unionists. You bet your boots we do, and we are proud of their support. I am proud to be fighting for the interests of trade unionists here at Queen's Park. Are the Liberals proud to be fighting for the interests of the auto insurance industry? The proof is in the pudding.

Harold Wrightman from Peterborough phones in a message to his member, the member for Peterborough. He says, "This is the last time I'll ever work for you." Mr Wrightman wants the member for Peterborough to resume his job teaching at the university.

2300

Bernice and Roland Seguin from Sturgeon Falls—I have a whole lot of Seguins living down in Welland; they are good people. The Seguins are a big family and they are good people. They are calling in from Sturgeon Falls. They are saying, "Keep up the good work."

Do you want to know what they are saying, Mr Speaker? They are saying the same things we have been telling you in this House for a long time. The Liberals are destroying small business here in the province of Ontario. The Liberal Party of Ontario is as anti-small-business as any party in any government ever could be. They are delivering the final blows through Bill 68. This is the party of big business; this is the party of big

corporate friends in the liquor industry, in the beer industry, perhaps in the garbage industry and certainly in the development industry. We are talking about the party of Patti Starr. We are talking about the party of fridges and paint jobs. We are talking about the party of Kenmore and Sherwin-Williams and Maytags.

Mr Speaker, was the fridge plain white? Was it a left-hand door or a right-hand door? Did the fridge have an ice-cube dispenser? Was the paint latex or oil?

The Acting Speaker: I would like to say to the honourable member for Welland-Thorold that of course he is straying somewhat from the debate before the House, and I can only remind him, if he would be so kind, to reconsider some of his discussion so that it makes and winds its way back to the subject at hand.

While I have the floor, it is usually customary, I have noticed from time to time, to recognize former colleagues of ours who are in attendance in the members' guest gallery, and be it far from me to be remiss, I recognize David Warner, who used to be a member.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: may I interrupt the member to express the fact that Mr Warner keeps making the mistake—

The Acting Speaker: No.

Mr R. F. Johnston: No? You do not want that? All right then, I will not.

Mr Kormos: Bernice and Roland Seguin from Sturgeon Falls know that this time allocation motion is bad, simply bad. Why will the Liberals not listen to people like the Seguins from Sturgeon Falls? The Speaker wants me to come back on topic.

You heard me tell before about the time the road was washed out in Marathon on the Trans-Canada when I was coming back from the copper—

Mr B. Rae: I have more phone calls here for you, a lot of messages are coming in at 965-1224.

Mr Kormos: I appreciate that. Glen Barkley from Parry Sound supports us. "Thanks for stepping on their toes."

Steve French, Toronto, small-business person, is through with the Liberals. Joanne Jenkins from Welland pays \$2,400 a year for insurance. Wow, that will not wash where I come from.

Tony Carillo and his wife, Melinda, from Welland. I know that Tony and Melinda Carillo are as important to you as they are to me, just like Ed Hoag from Scarborough. He says: "This closure motion is totally ridiculous. Liberals are gearing up for an election which they will not win." That is what Ed Hoag in Scarborough says.

Rob Sitte from Scarborough, a single parent, cannot come down in person, but Rob Sitte phones in at 965-1224 to say that our voice is his voice. Why will the Liberals not listen? Mr Sitte does not have a fridge on the back of his truck.

Mr Allen: What is that a reference to?

An hon member: Come clean, come out of the fridge.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Tell me about Marathon.

Mr Kormos: I will tell you that, Mr Speaker. In Marathon the highway is washed out. I am coming back from the copper mines and I have got to make a detour that seems like it is never going to end. It seems as if it is hundreds and hundreds, and it is hundreds and hundreds of miles. But eventually you get back to the Trans-Canada. Eventually I found my way on through to Sudbury and then back down south to Downsview where I went

to school, at York University. You see, Mr Speaker, there are small detours and there are big detours, but a detour is a detour. Do not go away. My goodness, Mr Speaker, the Liberals are getting mad and they are starting to leave.

Mr Philip: Charlie is helping out with our phone bank. He has come over to us.

Mr Kormos: How can Brian Mennen from Brantford afford to pay for automobile insurance on a disability pension? That is what Brian Mennen wants to know. Richard Spence from Kitchener: "This provincial government is no better than the federal government. Won't vote Liberal. Thanks for sticking up for us." Ken Moore from Willowdale appreciates all that we have been doing, has written to his MPP, the member who is the Minister of Health. He has not gotten a reply, not even a phone call.

Those things happen, do they not, Mr Speaker? Especially when you are a Liberal who does not want to answer questions about Bill 68. Remember the letter I read you a little bit earlier today, back around five hours and change ago? You know, Mr Speaker, we have spoken for almost 28 hours now, and that is the longest debate in the history of this Legislature. That is the longest debate that is spread out over a number of days. I want to tell you, Mr Speaker, and I know that the Clerk is going to help us, because we are approaching, now, at 11:05 pm, yet another record of one sort or another.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

2309

Mr Kormos: David Case from Toronto calls, says he is behind us 100 per cent. Mr Speaker, remember back a little while ago, when I talked about FAIR? I read from a FAIR tabloid. You have got to forgive me. I probably should wear glasses, should I not?

Mr B. Rae: There are some more calls for you coming in all the time.

Mr Kormos: Thank you. Richard Cuba from London; Gerry Birmingham, Sault Ste Marie; John Purcell from Welland—full support in what we are doing. Dr Earl Dobkin from Toronto says, "Keep fighting." Simon Blackstone; oh, Simon Blackstone has a way with words. Simon Blackstone is a wordsmith. Simon Blackstone—this, I think, is one of those little if-then situations in logic and I am not exactly sure—if our friend the member for Sault Ste Marie were here, he would know all about that kind of stuff—but he says, "If Patti Starr is a snake, then which cabinet minister is a worm?"

Mr Allen: It's a guessing question.

Mr Kormos: Ron Reese in Welland calls in. He is as mad as hell that the Liberals are not permitting full debate on this issue. Tim Prothero from—

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member, who has always been most obliging to me from time to time when I have been concerned about his use of language—now, h-e-l-l. It is written in the good book, and of course you can use it in terms of heaven-and-hell this, heaven-and-hell that, but I do not know. You have been using it periodically in a manner that, although it has not been overly disruptive to the House, I just feel a titch uncomfortable. But I know the member for Scarborough West would have something to say about that.

Mr R. F. Johnston: I do have two comments I would like to make and I agree with you that there is always—we have to be very careful about how we use that particular phrase. I think

it is fair to say that many members on all sides in recent time have used the word in the sense of an expletive, if I can put it that way, or to express a very strong emotional feeling about something, and it has not been ruled out of order, although I believe it is in the list of words which are not to be used from time to time.

But I am amazed these days about what one can find in the dictionary, and with its other meanings. This word, in fact, expressions of sorts which indicate the vernacular usage of this are now commonly shown in some of the larger dictionaries of the time, of which I would be pleased to go and get some examples and read them to you, as well as some other language which is even more obstreperous.

I think your caution to the member is a good one, that he should not use this unduly, but you are wise as well not to try to say this is something which is outside of the bounds of our common usage these days in the Legislature. As one who has been called to task from time to time myself on words of similar usage, which I have regretted deeply since and have tried my best to refrain from in these my twilight years here, and months and weeks and days in this Legislature, I think it was a very helpful intervention and I hope this has been helpful to the member for Welland-Thorold.

The Acting Speaker: The reason I bring that to the honourable member's attention is that I have a funny feeling that we are going to be here for some time. That being the case—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Well, then I will just wait to see whether we are going to be here for some time and, that being the case, possibly one's physical and mental attitudes become a little lax. I am just advising the member that, as tired as he might or might not get, we are all going to have to be a little cautious in terms of our use of language to all members of the House.

Mr R. F. Johnston: I have here the Concise Oxford Dictionary on the word "hell," which starts off "abode of the dead." One could say from time to time, but not this evening, this could be almost representative of this Legislature.

The Acting Speaker: Okay, we got the point.

Mr Kormos: Let me move this. I need some room here because we have to do some talking.

David Levian from Waterloo calls. He has been watching for the past week and a half. What is remarkable is that the people who are watching this right now are not watching the rerun from this afternoon. It is 11:15 at night and it is Thursday 26 April 1990 right here at Queen's Park—and they have come down to say hi and see a little bit of democracy at work, because they will be darned if they will see it snuffed out by the Liberals in their arrogance.

Mr Allen: I think recent watchers should know why you are doing what you are doing at the moment, and what time it is.

Mr Kormos: We are fighting the time allocation motion here. We are trying to persuade at least 29 Liberals to vote against this bad motion. That is all we need—29 Liberals who want to keep their jobs, who are prepared to vote against time allocation, are all that is necessary to defeat this motion.

Tim Prothero called from North Bay. Tim Prothero wanted to drive down to Queen's Park this evening. He talked to the member for York South just a few minutes ago and the Leader

of the Opposition persuaded him to stay where he was and watch it on his television set. We appreciate his wanting to drive down from North Bay, but we appreciate as much his calling and letting people in Ontario know that people in North Bay will not tolerate jackboot tactics from the Liberals at Queen's Park.

Steve Vance from Barrie called; Evelyn McNeil from Brampton.

Gladys Rothman, the New Democratic Party candidate in St Andrew-St Patrick in 1987, writes: "Dear brother, I am with you. Hang in there. The working people of Ontario are proud of you." I say God bless people like Gladys Rothman because that is real special folks. They are people who work real hard, and I say this: The member for St Andrew-St Patrick would not be supporting this bad legislation if it had been Gladys Rothman rather than the Liberal who is representing that riding right now. And I tell you this, Mr Speaker, the people of St Andrew-St Patrick are going to think twice, they are going to think thrice. It is not going to take them long at all to realize that they are going to have to vote for a New Democrat come the next general election because then they will elect somebody who will reject any proposition that premiums should go up. That is what Bill 68 is all about, higher premiums.

New Democrats representing St Andrew-St Patrick would reject any proposition that there should be closure motions here at Queen's Park, because that is all about gagging the opposition. That is all about muzzling the opposition. It is all about shutting down debate rather than fostering and encouraging debate.

When I was just a little kid and spending as much time in school as they would let me, I read books and read about history and about democracy, and I thought that democracy was all about debate, exchange, fair play. I read about Germany in the 1930s and the jackboots of the Nazis and how they shut down opposition, and I say that is the antithesis of democracy.

Here I am, and sometimes I say to myself that even though I have not yet spent quite two years here in this Legislature, I am surely going to go to heaven because, in the past two years, I have spent my time in Hades.

I am trying, Lord knows. Catch me around 3:30 this morning and we may not be able to pull that one off, I tell you, Mr Speaker.

2320

Mr R. F. Johnston: Here is one apropos to the Speaker's ruling.

Mr Kormos: Danny Sandford, of Whitby, a 73-year-old veteran from Hades Street.

Mr Allen: From where?

Mr Kormos: The hell, you say. He is from Hades Street. Danny Sandford is opposed. He is a veteran. He knows what I am talking about when I am talking about jackboot tactics. He knows what I am talking about when I am talking about trying to preserve some very fundamental things about our democratic system.

An hon member: You do not know what a democratic system is.

Mr Kormos: Who is this?

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: Roy Armstrong from Mississauga phones in. He is in full support of what we are trying to do. Homer Krug

from Windsor hopes that we are successful in fighting Bill 68. I tell you that. You know what? Angelo Bucciarelli drops by with his business card. He is a realtor. Angelo Bucciarelli from the National Group Realty Services Inc.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: I do not believe this. It is okay. Could you believe that, Mr Speaker?

Angelo Bucciarelli is a sales rep from National Group Realty Services Inc up on Wilson Avenue in Downsview. All I can tell you is that if Angelo Bucciarelli had a property listed, I would be looking to him for real fair, honest, straightforward dealing. I tell you, Angelo Bucciarelli works for National Group Realty. He is a guy, I tell you, you can trust.

He sends a card. It says: "Dear Mr Kormos: Please keep going. You're doing beautifully. No-fault stinks and"—he does not say very many complimentary things about the government. But it is awfully hard to say complimentary things about the government when it is trying to ram this legislation through, is it not?

You see, Angelo Bucciarelli came down from Downsview tonight. He brought some friends with him. Angelo Bucciarelli is not going to be shut out of his own Parliament. Angelo Bucciarelli is not going to tolerate closure, because do not forget, Mr Speaker, this closure motion—and all these people calling at area code 416-965-1224, every single one of them, are calling because they will not tolerate a shutdown of debate. They will not tolerate the Liberals seizing Parliament. They are seizing it with their majority as readily as it would be seized with guns and barricades. Remember what happened a little while ago? There were some people here—and again, I know the Speaker was in a horribly difficult position.

I told you about Evelyn McNeil and Steve Vance from Barrie, sure. Bill Watson from Windsor: "We don't want Bill 68." Bill Watson says so.

Rochelle and Jeff Smythe from Welland phone in at 965-1224 and they say, "Keep talking." Had it not been for Rochelle and Jeff Smythe calling in, I was thinking about ending this, but because Rochelle and Jeff Smythe phoned in, I am good for another 10 hours. I will tell you that, Mr Speaker.

We told you about Ken Moore from Willowdale or Bill Northmore from Mississauga. Bill and Diane Boyle are just two of the greatest people you ever met.

And you know what? Regardless of what happens, regardless of what people see on their TV screens, we are going to go all night and all morning. You know what? We are going to be here in time for the early editions of the Globe and Mail, the Toronto Star and the Toronto Sun. We are going to be here in time for the late editions of the Globe, the Star and the Sun come Friday 27 April 1990, regardless of what happens. I am telling you, Mr Speaker, I have not even started to deal with this material. I tell you what, I have not started to deal with this stuff here or the rest of this stuff beside my desk.

On that, Mr Speaker, I would move adjournment of the debate at this point in time.

The Acting Speaker: Why did I think that was coming?

2355

The House divided on Mr Kormos's motion, which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 12; nays 39.

The Speaker: I declare the motion lost. The debate will continue.

Hon Mr Scott: More, more. Go on.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Just a moment. I want to remind all members of standing order 20(b). I will recognize the one member to speak. I would also like, before I recognize the member, to advise all our visitors we are glad to have them here, but they are not allowed to participate in any way or demonstrate in any way.

Mr Farnan: Control the Attorney General.

Hon Mr Scott: As soon as Peter begins to speak, all the NDPers will leave.

Mr Farnan: Kick him out.

The Speaker: Order.

[Continued in No. 24]

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|---|
| Adams, Peter | Peterborough | L | Assistant to the Minister of the Environment |
| Allen, Richard | Hamilton West | NDP | |
| Ballinger, William G. | Durham-York | L | Assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Beer, Hon Charles | York North | L | Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. | Muskoka-Georgian Bay | L | Minister of Tourism and Recreation, minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Bossy, Maurice L. | Chatham-Kent | L | Assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Bradley, Hon James J. | St Catharines | L | Minister of the Environment |
| Brandt, Andrew S. | Sarnia | PC | Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party |
| Breaugh, Michael J. | Oshawa | NDP | First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Brown, Michael A. | Algoma-Manitoulin | L | |
| Bryden, Marion | Beaches-Woodbine | NDP | |
| Callahan, Robert V. | Brampton South | L | |
| Campbell, Sterling | Sudbury | L | |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor | Oriole | L | Minister of Health |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. | Oakville South | L | Assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Charlton, Brian A. | Hamilton Mountain | NDP | |
| Chiarelli, Robert | Ottawa West | L | |
| Cleary, John C. | Cornwall | L | Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Collins, Hon Shirley | Wentworth East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. | Renfrew North | L | Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities, Minister of Skills Development |
| Cooke, David R. | Kitchener | L | Assistant to the Minister of Citizenship |
| Cooke, David S. | Windsor-Riverside | NDP | House leader |
| Cordiano, Joseph | Lawrence | L | |
| Cousens, W. Donald | Markham | PC | |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. | London North | PC | |
| Cureatz, Sam L. | Durham East | PC | Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Curling, Alvin | Scarborough North | L | Assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Daigeler, Hans | Nepean | L | Assistant to the Minister of Revenue |
| Dietsch, Michael M. | St Catharines-Brock | L | Assistant to the Minister of Labour |
| Eakins, John F. | Victoria-Haliburton | L | |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. | Perth | L | Speaker |
| Elliot, R. Walter | Halton North | L | Assistant to the Minister of Housing |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. | Bruce | L | Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Financial Institutions |
| Epp, Herbert A. | Waterloo North | L | |
| Eves, Ernie L. | Parry Sound | PC | House leader |
| Farnan, Michael | Cambridge | NDP | |
| Faubert, Frank | Scarborough-Ellesmere | L | |
| Fawcett, Joan M. | Northumberland | L | Assistant to the Minister of Skills Development |
| Ferraro, Rick E. | Guelph | L | Assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|---|
| Fleet, David | High Park-Swansea | L | Assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Fontaine, Hon René | Cochrane North | L | Minister of Northern Development |
| Fulton, Ed | Scarborough East | L | Assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation |
| Furlong, Allan W. | Durham Centre | L | |
| Grandmaître, Bernard C. | Ottawa East | L | Assistant to the Minister of Health |
| Grier, Ruth A. | Etobicoke-Lakeshore | NDP | |
| Haggerty, Ray | Niagara South | L | Assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| Hampton, Howard | Rainy River | NDP | |
| Harris, Michael D. | Nipissing | PC | |
| Hart, Hon Christine E. | York East | L | Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Henderson, D. James | Etobicoke-Humber | L | Assistant to the minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Hošek, Chaviva | Oakwood | L | Assistant to the Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet |
| Jackson, Cameron | Burlington South | PC | |
| Johnson, Jack | Wellington | PC | |
| Johnston, Richard F. | Scarborough West | NDP | |
| Kanter, Ron | St Andrew-St Patrick | L | |
| Kerrio, Vincent G. | Niagara Falls | L | |
| Keyes, Kenneth A. | Kingston and The Islands | L | Assistant to the Minister of Education |
| Kormos, Peter | Welland-Thorold | NDP | |
| Kozyra, Taras B. | Port Arthur | L | Assistant to the Minister of Northern Development |
| Kwinter, Hon Monte | Wilson Heights | L | Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Laughren, Floyd | Nickel Belt | NDP | |
| LeBourdais, Linda | Etobicoke West | L | |
| Leone, Laureano | Downsview | L | Assistant to the Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Lipsett, Ron | Grey | L | Assistant to the Minister of Energy |
| Lupusella, Tony | Dovercourt | L | Assistant to the Minister of Government Services |
| MacDonald, Keith | Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings | L | |
| Mackenzie, Bob | Hamilton East | NDP | |
| Mahoney, Steven W. | Mississauga West | L | |
| Mancini, Hon Remo | Essex South | L | Minister of Revenue |
| Marland, Margaret | Mississauga South | PC | |
| Martel, Shelley | Sudbury East | NDP | |
| Matrundola, Gino | Willowdale | L | |
| McCague, George R. | Simcoe West | PC | |
| McClelland, Carman | Brampton North | L | |
| McGuigan, James F. | Essex-Kent | L | Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| McLean, Allan K. | Simcoe East | PC | |
| McLeod, Hon Lyn | Fort William | L | Minister of Energy, Minister of Natural Resources |
| Miclash, Frank | Kenora | L | |
| Miller, Gordon I. | Norfolk | L | Assistant to the Minister of Transportation |
| Morin, Hon Gilles E. | Carleton East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Morin-Strom, Karl E. | Sault Ste Marie | NDP | |
| Neumann, David E. | Brantford | L | |
| Nicholas, Cindy | Scarborough Centre | L | Assistant to the Solicitor General |
| Nixon, J. Bradford | York Mills | L | |
| Nixon, Hon Robert F. | Brant-Haldimand | L | Deputy Premier, Treasurer of Ontario, Minister of Economics |
| Oddie Munro, Lily | Hamilton Centre | L | |
| Offer, Hon Steven | Mississauga North | L | Solicitor General |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|---|
| O'Neil, Hon Hugh P. | Quinte | L | Minister of Mines |
| O'Neill, Yvonne | Ottawa-Rideau | L | |
| Owen, Bruce | Simcoe Centre | L | |
| Patten, Hon Richard | Ottawa Centre | L | Minister of Correctional Services |
| Pelissero, Harry E. | Lincoln | L | |
| Peterson, Hon David R. | London Centre | L | Premier, President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Philip, Ed | Etobicoke-Rexdale | NDP | |
| Phillips, Hon Gerry | Scarborough-Agincourt | L | Minister of Labour |
| Poirier, Jean | Prescott and Russell | L | Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Pollock, Jim | Hastings-Peterborough | PC | |
| Polsinelli, Claudio | Yorkview | L | Assistant to the Attorney General |
| Poole, Dianne | Eglinton | L | Assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Pope, Alan W. | Cochrane South | PC | |
| Pouliot, Gilles | Lake Nipigon | NDP | |
| Rae, Bob | York South | NDP | Leader of the Official Opposition |
| Ramsay, Hon David | Timiskaming | L | Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Ray, Michael C. | Windsor-Walkerville | L | |
| Reville, David | Riverdale | NDP | Chief whip |
| Reycraft, Douglas R. | Middlesex | L | Assistant to the Treasurer and Minister of Economics |
| Riddell, Jack | Huron | L | Assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources |
| Roberts, Marietta L. D. | Elgin | L | |
| Runciman, Robert W. | Leeds-Grenville | PC | |
| Ruprecht, Tony | Parkdale | L | Assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services |
| Scott, Hon Ian G. | St George-St David | L | Attorney General |
| Smith, David W. | Lambton | L | Assistant to the Minister of Correctional Services |
| Smith, E. Joan | London South | L | Chief government whip |
| Sola, John | Mississauga East | L | |
| Sorbara, Hon Gregory S. | York Centre | L | Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| South, Larry | Frontenac-Addington | L | Assistant to the Minister of Mines |
| Sterling, Norman W. | Carleton | PC | |
| Stoner, Norah | Durham West | L | Assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities |
| Sullivan, Barbara | Halton Centre | L | |
| Sweeney, Hon John | Kitchener-Wilmot | L | Minister of Housing and Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Tatham, Charlie | Oxford | L | |
| Velshi, Murad | Don Mills | L | |
| Villeneuve, Noble | Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry | PC | Chief whip |
| Ward, Hon Christopher C. | Wentworth North | L | Minister of Government Services, government House leader |
| Wildman, Bud | Algoma | NDP | |
| Wilson, Hon Mavis, | Dufferin-Peel | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Wiseman, Douglas J. | Lanark-Renfrew | PC | |
| Wong, Hon Robert C. | Fort York | L | Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for the Ontario Human Rights Commission, minister responsible for multiculturalism, minister responsible for race relations |
| Wrye, Hon William | Windsor-Sandwich | L | Minister of Transportation |
| Vacant | Ottawa South | | |

A list of committee members is published in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

CONTENTS

Thursday 26 April 1990

Private members' public business

| | |
|---|-------|
| Powers of Attorney Amendment Act, 1990, Bill 131 | . 773 |
| Mr Sterling | . 773 |
| Mr Polsinelli | . 774 |
| Mrs Grier | . 775 |
| Mr Cousens | . 775 |
| Mr Daigeler | . 776 |
| Mr Reville | . 777 |
| Mr J. M. Johnson | . 777 |
| Agreed to | . 786 |
| Government operations, resolution 49 | . 779 |
| Mr Carrothers | . 779 |
| Mr Philip | . 780 |
| Mr McCague | . 782 |
| Mr McLean | . 782 |
| Mr Tatham | . 783 |
| Mr Mackenzie | . 784 |
| Miss Roberts | . 784 |
| Agreed to | . 786 |

Members' statements

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Social assistance | . 787 |
| Mr Allen | |
| Ontario economy | . 787 |
| Mr McCague | |
| Ramadan | . 787 |
| Mr Velshi | |
| Workers' compensation | . 787 |
| Mr Morin-Strom | |
| Budget | . 787 |
| Mrs Cunningham | |
| Affordable housing | . 788 |
| Mr Owen | |
| Northern health travel grants | . 788 |
| Mr Hampton | |
| Budget | . 788 |
| Mr J. M. Johnson | |
| Edmund C. Bovey | . 788 |
| Mr Ferraro | |
| Injured Workers Day | . 789 |
| Mr Phillips | |
| Mr Mackenzie | |
| Mr Runciman | |

Statements by the ministry

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Power blackout in Toronto | . 790 |
| Mrs Caplan | |
| Taxation | . 790 |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Child care | . 791 |
| Mr Beer | |

Responses

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Power blackout in Toronto | . 791 |
| Mr Reville | |
| Taxation | . 791 |
| Mr Laughren | |
| Child care | . 791 |
| Mr Allen | |
| Mrs Cunningham | |
| Taxation | . 792 |
| Mr McCague | |
| Power blackout in Toronto | . 792 |
| Mr Cureatz | |

Oral questions

| | |
|--|-------|
| Taxation | . 793 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Northern development | . 793 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Mr Hampton | |
| Mr Pouliot | |
| Services for the disabled | . 794 |
| Mrs Marland | |
| Mr Beer | |
| Mrs Cunningham | |
| Rent regulation | . 795 |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | |
| Mr Sweeney | |
| Investigation into municipal election | . 796 |
| Mr McLean | |
| Mr Offer | |
| Decentralization of government operations | . 796 |
| Mr M. C. Ray | |
| Mr Ward | |
| Closing of campgrounds | . 796 |
| Mr Villeneuve | |
| Mr Black | |
| Regulation of insurance companies | . 797 |
| Mr Runciman | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Economic outlook | . 798 |
| Mr Daigeler | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Services for the disabled | . 798 |
| Mr Allen | |
| Mr Beer | |
| Infrastructure financing | . 799 |
| Mr Sterling | |
| Mr Bradley | |
| Municipal reorganization | . 799 |
| Mr Owen | |
| Mr Sweeney | |

| | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| Long-term care | .800 |
| Mr Reville | |
| Mrs Caplan | |
| GO Transit | .800 |
| Mr Cureatz | |
| Mr Wrye | |

Motion

| | |
|--|------|
| Committee substitutions | .801 |
| Mr Ward | |
| Agreed to | .801 |

Petitions

| | |
|---|------|
| French-language services | .801 |
| Mr Allen | |
| Abortion | .801 |
| Mr Villeneuve | |
| Employer health tax | .801 |
| Mr Adams | |
| Automobile insurance | .801 |
| Mr Kormos | |
| Greater Toronto area | .801 |
| Mr Philip | |

Budget debate

| | |
|--|------|
| Resuming the adjourned debate | .802 |
| Mr Villeneuve | .802 |
| Mrs Sullivan | .807 |
| Mr Kormos | .811 |
| Mr Philip | .812 |
| Mr Matrondola | .814 |
| Adjourned | .817 |

Government motion

| | |
|----------------------------------|------|
| Time allocation | .817 |
| Mr Kormos | .817 |

Other business

| | |
|---|------|
| Visitor | .792 |
| The Speaker | |
| Business of the House | .802 |
| Mr Ward | |
| Afternoon sitting | .787 |
| Alphabetical list of members | .845 |

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Le jeudi 26 avril 1990

Déclaration ministérielle

| | |
|----------------------------------|------|
| Garde d'enfants | .791 |
| M Beer | |

Pétition

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| Services en français | .801 |
| M Allen | |



24 90

24 90

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Friday 27 April 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le vendredi 27 avril 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Friday 27 April 1990

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TIME ALLOCATION (continued from No 23)

Resuming the adjourned debate on government notice of motion 30 on time allocation in relation to Bill 68, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, you might recall that I was talking about the comments made by one D. W. Monteith from Newmarket. Mr Speaker, I am so pleased that you made note of the visitors here in the gallery. These folk came down here to Queen's Park at midnight. There are another 35 telephone calls here. These people came down here to Queen's Park at midnight on Thursday 26 April 1990 to see something very special. They came down here at midnight on Thursday 26 April 1990 because we have a whole bunch of people here at Queen's Park right now who do not think the Liberals should be able to shut down oppositions either. We have a whole bunch of people right here at Queen's Park sitting in these galleries. You know what, Mr Speaker? There is room for more.

We are doing something very special this evening. This House is sitting well beyond what the rules normally call for. We are into the 30th hour or so of this debate. I am speaking of the 30th hour that I have been speaking on the issue. I tell you, Mr Speaker, there is a whole lot more to come. You are talking about a speech that is the longest speech in the history of the provincial Legislature and, Mr Speaker, as of midnight tonight you are also talking about the longest single speech at any one time: from 6 pm until 12 midnight tonight. The fact is, we broke the Queen's Park record some weeks ago for day-to-day speeches, and today we broke the record for the longest single speech. But you know what, Mr Speaker? There is more to come.

I will tell you what I want to talk about for just a minute. We are going to get back to Mr Monteith's record shortly. You know, Mr Speaker, that 8 January 1990 was the only day that the Minister of Financial Institutions appeared at the standing committee on general government during its consideration of Bill 68. The House leader has a hard time understanding why we find it repugnant that the Liberals would want to spend but two afternoons in committee of the whole over Bill 68. Why, these guys want to crush the life out of democracy. The Liberals here at Queen's Park do not just want to impose closure on the opposition; the Liberals want to impose closure on the people of Ontario, on the drivers and taxpayers and innocent injured victims. That is what is happening with this motion.

Back on 8 January 1990 the Minister of Financial Institutions appeared in front of the general government committee for about one afternoon. He appeared there to unload his salvo, to dump all over, if you will, people like John Bates from PRIDE. Do you know John Bates, the president of PRIDE, People to Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere, Mr Speaker? Why, Mr Bates is just about one of the finest people that this province has ever seen. You are talking about People to Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere, an organization that is committed to speaking out for the victims of drunk drivers, that is committed to speaking out and coming to the aid of the families, of the young people and old, but the young and old whose lives are crushed out, snuffed out by the drunk on the highway. You are

talking about John Bates, who has probably given this government more guidance on how to respond to the problem of drinking and driving, and the carnage that that creates on the highway, than any other single person.

What does the Minister of Financial Institutions do? Without John Bates being there, without any representative from PRIDE being there on 8 January 1990, the only day that the minister showed up—the only day of its complete sittings that the Minister of Financial Institutions showed up, graced that committee with his presence, if such can be grace—he showed up there to dump all over people like John Bates from PRIDE, to dump all over him. I tell you, Mr Speaker, John Bates from PRIDE deserves better, especially from the Minister of Financial Institutions. John Bates has dedicated this latter part of his lifetime to making life better for people here in the province of Ontario, but the Minister of Financial Institutions did not leave it at that.

You see, Ralph Nader had been here in Toronto some couple of months prior. Ralph had come up here from the United States to talk about the tragedy that threshold insurance posed for Canadian drivers, Canadian taxpayers and Ontario's innocent injured victims. These are the same innocent injured victims whom we have been talking about. I tell you that it is the case that, if Bill 68 is permitted to become law, over 95 per cent of them will not be entitled to any compensation for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life. Mr Speaker, does that impress you as fair? There is not a fair-minded person in this province who would find that acceptable. But the insurance industry is oh-so-pleased about that, that threshold which is going to guarantee that at least 95 per cent of all innocent injured accident victims here in the province of Ontario do not receive a penny in compensation for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life.

The insurance companies find that quite acceptable. You know why, Mr Speaker? Because that is going to put \$823 million into the insurance companies' pockets in the first year alone, that is why. The insurance companies of the province of Ontario are prepared to bolster up their profits to tune of almost \$1 billion on the broken backs, the broken legs, the broken arms, the fractured skulls of kids and other victims of drunk drivers, careless drivers, negligent drivers.

Hon Mrs Caplan: Your nose is growing.

Mr Kormos: The Minister of Health is talking about my nose growing. Holy cow.

Back to Mr Nader here at Queen's Park. In the latter part of 1989, Mr Nader came up here to tell Canadians, based on his experience as a consumer advocate and his experience with the insurance industry. We are talking about a consumers' rights expert whose testimony has been accepted by dozens and dozens of congressional and senatorial investigations into the insurance industry in the United States of America.

The Minister of Financial Institutions felt real brave appearing on that day—the only half day he ever showed up in front of that general government committee. Remember that this is the same general government committee where the member for Guelph, the minister's parliamentary assistant, after we appeared in Sudbury said, "Oh my; we"—those are the Liberals—"got hammered by the opposition."

What was the opposition? You remember, Mr Speaker. You know who opposed Bill 68 in front of those committee hearings. You know the insurance industry was there advocating it and the insurance industry was looking at a billion-dollar payday, and quite frankly still is. The insurance industry figures it has at least rented if not actually bought a government.

The auto insurance industry here in the province of Ontario thinks that Bill 68 is rightly its. I will tell you, Mr Speaker: That same insurance industry figures that it has at least rented if not actually bought a government. So representatives of that same auto insurance industry from here in the province of Ontario were appearing in front of that committee telling these Liberals sitting on that committee—and it is not that the Liberals on the committee were alien or were unknown to the insurance industry, because what we had discovered, in short order, was that some of the very same Liberals sitting on that committee, on that general government committee, whose job it was to hear submissions about Bill 68, had been receiving insurance company donations at election time. You see, it might be unparliamentary to suggest that that should be called grease, but where I come from we call that grease; we call that payola.

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Mr Speaker, I am telling you, you have people sitting on that committee who have received not insignificant donations from auto insurance companies during the course of their 1987 election campaigns. You know what, Mr Speaker? They did not even declare that obvious conflict. Those same Liberals sitting on that general government committee had been the beneficiaries of some awfully impressive insurance company largess. Why, it is no wonder premiums are so high; look at what the insurance companies are spending those premium dollars on. Some of the very same members who were sitting in deliberation of submissions being made to them by people from all across Ontario had themselves been the beneficiaries and the grantees; had been able to pocket, for their campaigns, money donated to them by the auto insurance industry here in the province of Ontario.

I suppose that some of the damage could have been undone had those same people stood up and said: "Look, I'm quite eager to sit on this general government committee. I want you on the committee and you in the public to understand that in fact, yes, I have received donations from the auto insurance industry." That would have gone a little bit of the way towards—you know the old adage, Mr Speaker: Justice must not only be done—I will bet there are a few Liberals in the lawyers' ranks who forgot this a long time ago—but it must also seem or appear to be done. People have to be satisfied that what is happening is legitimate and fair.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Kormos: You know, Mr Speaker—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, I want to get back to what I was talking about, but I have to tell you that people are listening all over the province. Greta Parrotta in Welland just called in. She says no-fault is no good. In fact, in spite of the fact that some of the people in her household have to go to work tomorrow they are going to stay up all night to watch this with the rest of these folks. So God bless Greta Parrotta.

Alan Wilson in Barrie: Bill 68 terrifies him. He just phoned in, Alan Wilson in Barrie.

An hon member: What number did he phone?

Mr Kormos: He phoned 965-1224.

Jane Brain from Hamilton-Wentworth called on behalf of several single mothers: "If Bill 68 goes through, these moms won't be able to drive their children to school. Citizens of the future are being threatened by this bill."

Why will the Liberals not listen to Jane Brain? Why will the Liberals not listen to Alan Wilson of Barrie? Why will the Liberals not listen to Greta Parrotta of Welland? Because these people are not insurance company executives; because these people cannot make \$1,000 contributions at election time; because these people do not have boardrooms in big high-rises with thick, plush carpets; because these people work for their livings and the Liberal Party of Ontario is not interested in representing people who work hard for livings. I tell you that, Mr Speaker.

Pat Poirier from St Catharines is listening and he just called in and said it is time the government was accountable to the people. Delema Duquett from North Bay had been trying for four hours to call us at 965-1224. She finally got through. She says "Keep it up," that the Liberals have forgotten them up there in the north. You bet your boots they have.

Why will the Liberals not listen to people like Delema Duquett? Because she is not an executive from a big insurance company with big donations to make at election time. That is why. Mr Speaker, could you please make them listen? Could you? Because that is all we want. All we want is the Liberals in this province to do what the people of this province want done. All we want is for the Liberals to say to the insurance companies: "The insurance companies are on their own. We're going to finally decide to represent the working people of this province instead of the big, wealthy, powerful insurance industry."

All we want is 29 Liberals, because that is all we need to defeat this motion: 29 Liberals who want to be re-elected. We are looking for 29 Liberals who like their jobs and want to get re-elected, because those 29 Liberals will vote no to defeat this time motion and those 29 Liberals will vote no on Bill 68. I tell you what, Mr Speaker: Remember I told you earlier about Jeanne Dixon's predictions? I do not know about the rest of it, but I can tell you this: Those 29 Liberals will get re-elected. That is a guarantee.

Lisa Curtez from Mississauga says "No way" to Bill 68. Lisa Curtez has a six-star rating and her auto insurance has gone up 50 per cent before Bill 68 even gets implemented. Lisa Curtez is scared out of her wits and she is going to be among those people, among those almost a third of a million people right here in the province of Ontario who, once Bill 68 is passed, will face premium increases of as high as 80 per cent.

Mr Speaker, I tell you that the general government committee heard submissions about Bill 68. I tell you, the insurance industry supported Bill 68. The insurance industry wants Bill 68 passed so bad. The insurance industry—you want to know something? They ain't phoning in, but they are watching. The insurance industry is not phoning in, but I tell you they are watching, because they are as nervous as a cat on a hot tin roof. They have already started to spend the money that they were planning on making by virtue of Bill 68. Those Lamborghinis and those Ferraris have already been ordered and the down payments have already been made. There are going to be an awful lot of insurance company executives awfully disap-

pointed if we can manage to find 29 good Liberals who want to get re-elected.

I will tell you about who has been appearing in front of the general government committee. We are going to get to Ralph Nader, because he appeared there. I want to talk to you about what Ralph Nader told that committee, because that is the important thing. You see, the Minister of Financial Institutions was not there. He would dump all over Ralph Nader when Ralph Nader was gone, but when Ralph Nader showed up did the minister confront him? No way; no sirree, Bob. I tell you: No, sir, he would not show up and confront him, not for love or money. The fact is that on 8 January 1990 the Minister of Financial Institutions dumped all over Ralph Nader.

There are more telephone calls. Peter and Mona Holt from Toronto Island: "The Liberals have forgotten drivers, north-erners and tenants." Gary from Welland has been up for 36 hours but he will stay up all night to watch.

People are concerned about what is happening here in this assembly. People have never seen anything like this because people have never seen the Liberals try to impose such unpopular legislation. People have never seen the public of Ontario sold out so thoroughly and so quickly and so promptly by a government that could not give a tinker's damn for the drivers or the taxpayers or the innocent injured victims, those 95 per cent of all innocent injured victims who will not get a penny, not a nickel, not a dime in compensation for their pain and suffering. Those are the people who are being sold out so that an insurance industry that is already very powerful—we know that, because it can pull the strings of a government—and very wealthy can find and earn new profits, windfall profits, of \$1 billion in the first year alone.

0020

Vincent McAloon from Etobicoke says, "Down with all tyrants, especially the Liberals." He says, "Keep up the good work." William and Dorothy Payson from St Catharines—

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: People are not listening? People have never been more afraid in their lives. People have never been more concerned in their lives.

Mr Speaker, it is 12:20, it is 20 minutes after midnight.

Mr Philip: They are still calling.

Mr Kormos: Most people should be in bed at this time of night, you and I included, Mr Speaker. But what is happening here is far too important. That is why William and Dorothy Payson from St Catharines call in and talk about how Bill 68 is going to inevitably drive up their insurance premiums.

John Bates from People to Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere called in. I tell you, Mr Speaker, John Bates is one of the finest people, one of the most selfless people I have ever met. John Bates, the president of PRIDE, is one of our great Ontarians and I say that without hesitation. The man is a kind, unassuming, gentle person and I tell you this, he is intolerant. You know that? John Bates is intolerant. It would seem that intolerance would have become a nasty word in our society and, indeed, to a large extent it has. But John Bates is intolerant of the drunk who would thoughtlessly smash down the kid into the asphalt on the highway. John Bates is intolerant of the reckless, negligent, careless driver, the very same sort of reckless, negligent, careless drunken driver who is likely and possibly to be treated better under Bill 68 than his or her victim. That is

exactly what we would like to talk to the Minister of Financial Institutions about.

You know what, Mr Speaker? I wish John Bates were right here. I wish John Bates were right here in this assembly so that people could look at what a great Ontarian looks like, I tell you that. If John Bates were to come here, we should be proud, as members of this assembly, for him to grace us with his presence. And the Minister of Financial Institutions dumps all over him. John Bates came to the general government committee. Was the Minister of Financial Institutions there to confront John Bates? No, no, no.

So that is why we oppose this time allocation motion, the two scant afternoons, the two two-and-a-half-hour periods that the government and the Premier of Ontario want to ensure that there is no meaningful debate about Bill 68. All that the House leader's time allocation motion permits is but two scant afternoons for committee of the whole. That is not even enough time for the Liberals to read into the record their proposed amendments. It makes a mockery, a sham, a pathetic mockery and sham of this assembly and of democracy in this province.

John Lent from Timmins phoned in some time around 5 or 10 minutes ago and he has been trying to get through for over an hour. He and his family are right behind us. He says no to time allocation and he says no to no-fault. James Singh from Willowdale is watching and he is saying, "No way to time allocation, no way to no-fault."

Remember, I was going to talk to you, Mr Speaker, about the kinds of people opposing Bill 68 at the general government committee. The Metropolitan Toronto Police Association was there on behalf of their thousands and thousands of good policemen and policewomen saying no to the Liberals' no-fault. No-fault? There is lots of fault with it. About the only people in this province for whom it is any good are the auto insurance industry, because it is going to make new windfall profits of \$1 billion in the first year alone. Can you believe it?

It is an industry that I tell you is not doing badly, thank you. It is doing quite fine. In 1989, the insurance industry in Canada enjoyed record profits for the last eight years. Profits for the insurance industry in Canada for 1989 were in excess of \$1 billion, and this government wants to hand over to the auto insurance industry in this province another \$1-billion windfall and I tell you, Mr Speaker, that is the first year alone. Do you think it is going to stop there? Not on your life. It is not going to stop there, I tell you that.

Nobody has ever talked about one-time-only premium increases. Because I tell you this, Mr Speaker: If your premiums go up by as much as 50 per cent in the first year, you can count on it, they are going to go up by at least that much in the second year and then more in the third, in the fourth, in the fifth. Look at what we are talking about. We are talking about a corporate automobile insurance industry whose purpose is to make profits. It is as simple as that and nobody is disputing that. But understand, for the briefest of moments, how an insurance company makes profits. Do not forget, their goal is to make the most amount of profit.

We have got business people sitting right here who understand that that is what free enterprise is all about, and when you leave something up to the corporate sector that is what you are left with, an industry that wants to maximize its profits. But how does the insurance industry do that? How does the insurance industry maximize profits? Well, you know how: by charging the greatest amount of premiums and paying out the least amount of compensation. It is not that hard to figure out, is it? It is pretty obvious to the most casual observer. There is

nothing mysterious about it. Insurance companies have the proverbial short arms and deep pockets. That is the nature of the beast.

There is nothing that has happened lately in this province that has caused the leopard to change its spots. Boards of directors in the insurance industry have not become occupied all of a sudden by Mother Teresas. They have not become charitable organizations. They are the same profit-making organizations they were last year, and the decade before and the decade before that.

Ralph Nader came to tell the people of Ontario that Bill 68 will not fly. The Ontario Teachers' Federation came to tell the Liberals of Ontario, "Bill 68, no-fault, no way, no thanks." St Catharines and District Labour Council—you remember, Mr Speaker—Rob West; he came to this general government committee to tell the Liberals on that committee that the 15,000 workers he represents from the St Catharines area and the St Catharines and District Labour Council oppose Bill 68. They oppose threshold insurance.

The provincial Sudbury Liberal Association passed a resolution condemning Bill 68. Indeed, the provincial Sudbury East Liberal Association passed a resolution condemning Bill 68 and calling upon Liberal members to vote against it, and in the case of Sudbury, calling on its own member, because, as the members well know, that riding is represented in this Legislature, at least until the next general election, by a Liberal.

The Police Association of Ontario, the Ontario Federation of Labour—they all oppose Bill 68, while the auto insurance industry is real gung-ho about Bill 68. If you are an auto insurance executive, Bill 68 is just about a perfect piece of legislation, no two ways about it. They did not even dare ask for that, remember that? Remember in front of Mr Justice Osborne, the multimillion-dollar provincial inquiry? The Liberals are giving the insurance industry more than the insurance industry dared even ask for.

David and Barbara White in London are listening. It is almost 12:30 on a Thursday night, early Friday morning, and David and Barbara White in London are listening and saying, "No way to no-fault."

0030

Jessie Provan, East York, has been trying to get through for hours. She is 36 years in Canada. She blesses me, and I appreciate that. Lord knows, Mr Speaker, I need as many blessings as I can get. I tell you that right now. You know that better than I do. Jessie Provan is a senior from East York. She is going to stay up all night.

Here is a worker from State Farm Insurance who phoned up. He said it is already set up. It is a go. What does that mean, Mr Speaker? Does that mean that the whole parliamentary function has been usurped? Does that mean that the Liberals were bold enough to dare count their chickens before their eggs hatched? Does that mean the Liberals had their marching orders and that the only thing they can avail themselves of now is the Nuremberg defence? Does that mean it is in the bag, it is all wrapped up with a bow? Not if I have anything to do with it, not if the rest of the New Democratic caucus here has anything to do with it and not if we can find 29 Liberals who want to get re-elected in the next general election. A worker from State Farm phones up and says it is already set up. He says, "Quite frankly, the whole scene is disgusting."

A lady called at 12:15 to say good night. She is smarter than all of us. She is going to bed. But she adds that she hopes we

are still going when she gets up in the morning. That is easy for her to say.

Ralph Nader appeared on 15 January—

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: I am just amazed at the occasional squawk that comes out of Liberal benches here. When I hear that squeal of pain, I sort of feel like a dentist. I feel as if I should be asking the nurse to administer more Novocain, because I know we are getting close to a nerve when the Liberals start doing their jack-in-the-box routines, jumping up and down, doing points of order, doing this and that in every which way they can.

Do you want to know something, Mr Speaker? Their House leader promised them that I was going to be out of here by around 10 o'clock, 10:30. Do you know that? No, not on your life, because we have a time allocation motion to talk about.

I wanted to talk specifically about what Ralph Nader had to say on 15 January in front of the standing committee on general government. If I had the 15 January transcript, which I had here a moment ago, I would be referring to that. As it is now, I might have to refer to 8 January. But, Mr Speaker, I am going to talk more about the people who oppose Bill 68. Those are the people who came before the general government committee. Those are the people about whom the parliamentary assistant, as I told you before, said, "We got hammered." That is to say, the Liberals got hammered by the opposition.

The first day that committee sat was 8 January 1990, at least in terms of hearing submissions. I have told you this before, Mr Speaker, but I think it warrants impressing upon you, if you will permit me. What we are doing here is trying to get these Liberals to acknowledge that the people of Ontario want to see a full debate about Bill 68; that they will not tolerate jack-bootism; that they insist that the Liberals not be permitted to hijack Parliament, to hijack the Legislature, and I have little difficulty joining with them in that regard.

On 15 January 1990—I thought I would never find it—Ralph Nader appeared in front of the general government committee. One of the things I wanted to try to tell you, Mr Speaker, and this is important, when we are talking about why we feel it is so imperative that there be full discussion of Bill 68, is that the general government committee—mind you, it was dominated by Liberals. You see, how it works is that you have six Liberals, two New Democrats and two Tories. I tell you, that is depressing, no two ways about it. The fact is that the Liberals vote in a bloc. You have the trained-seal syndrome. You have a whole bunch of Liberals who are really good at holding the red ball on their noses for hours on end. But think for themselves? Not for a million bucks. Oh, for the insurance companies, a billion bucks, but for themselves, not for a million bucks.

So you got Liberals on there who resisted every New Democrat move to try to open up the process. We are talking about Liberals who ran—I am not old enough that my memory should be starting to fail me, and I distinctly remember the Liberals in this province running on a campaign that there was going to be open government, a campaign of consultation. They were going to consult.

Here are more phone calls. These people called in to 965-1239. Marie O'Brien from Chatham: "Good luck. Always voted Liberal. Won't next time."

Gail Baldwin from Mississauga: Her friends are coming down. Well, come on down. But she cannot come because she has been in an auto accident. She knows that if Bill 68 had been passed before her accident, she would not receive the compen-

sation she is entitled to. So we all wish Gail Baldwin the very best, I know that, and a speedy recovery.

People have accused me of delaying Bill 68. Do you want to know something, Mr Speaker? Every day that we have been able to prevent Bill 68 from becoming law, there are people out there who are tragically the victims of motor vehicle accidents who will get compensation that is rightly theirs. Do you want to know something? If I can be accused of delaying Bill 68, why I—

Interjection

Mr Kormos: You see, I told you. Bring on the Novocain, Mr Speaker, we are touching a nerve, honest to goodness. Tell them not to worry, we are not going to pull it, we are just going to drill a little more. This is the proverbial political root canal, ain't it? It is tough out there when you have made promises to the insurance industry that are getting all fouled up now. They promised the insurance industry that this was going to be wrapped up lock, stock and barrel and it is not.

Do you want to know why, Mr Speaker? Because hundreds of people have been phoning in to Queen's Park tonight alone, to 965-1239 and they have been phoning in to 965-1224. They have been waiting for as long as one, two and three hours to get through on those lines, people like Gail Baldwin who is sending her friends down to Queen's Park because they have a right to be here.

Arnold Walker phones in from St Thomas. He says he has been watching for weeks. He says: "You have our full support in St Thomas. You are doing a great job. Bill 68 is appalling."

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Cureatz): The honourable member for Port Arthur, yoo-hoo.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Right. He is sorry, so it is okay.

0040

Mr R. F. Johnston: Mr Speaker, I want you to know something: I am sorry too. I am sorry for the people of Thunder Bay who made the mistake of electing the member once.

The Acting Speaker: You are not helping matters at all. Shame on you. Listen, you are just egging him on. We were doing quite well. It is only 12:40 am.

Mr Kormos: Arnold Walker from St Thomas called in. He has been watching this for a few weeks. He tells the opposition that we have his full support. He says that we are doing a great job. We appreciate that because it is phone calls like this that people are calling in to 965-1224 and 965-1239, people phoning in to those phones right here at Queen's Park, right here in the members' lobby, that are giving me the energy and the enthusiasm to make this last lap. I am going to be here at noon tomorrow.

An hon member: Noon?

Mr Kormos: Noon.

An hon member: All right, I'll be back.

Mr Kormos: You remember remember what happened on 15 January 1990, do you not, Mr Speaker? Vicky Turgeon from Welland and her son Todd are watching. They are up late at night and I appreciate their staying up to watch, but they are also seeing something really important happening right here in this province of Ontario. They are seeing hundreds and

thousands of people telling these Liberals to take their closure and stuff it. Vicky Turgeon and her son Todd from Welland are watching this and they know what happened.

What happened on 15 January? Let me tell you what happened. Paul Jewell from Toronto knows that the Liberal majority is being used against democracy. The Liberal majority is being used to snuff out democracy. Paul Jewell from Toronto knows that.

Lori Boyle Cousineau from Welland says: "Keep it up, Pete. Don't let them do it to us." She is talking about the Liberals.

Helen and May Driscoll from Scarborough—I think I mentioned them.

John Morden and Barbara Gravenhurst have been trying for some time to get through. Mr Speaker, will you please listen to this? And it bothers me to have to say this. This disturbs me a great deal. Profanity? Yes, this is a profanity and it bothers me a great deal to say it, but John Morden and Barbara Gravenhurst say that they should remind the Liberals what Hitler's regime did to democracy in Germany and that the Liberals in Queen's Park ought to listen to the people of Ontario. That is a profanity. When people here in Ontario speak of their government and Hitler's regime in the same breath, it is a sad day for the state of politics, is it not?

But the people cannot be fooled. The people know that what is happening is that legislation that is incredibly unpopular and incredibly bad is being forced upon the people of Ontario because the government sold its soul.

Jack Lavell, and Shane and Shawn; I know Jack Lavell, and he has sons, twins I think, Shane and Shawn. They phoned in with support. They note that the insurance companies are already training the employees on no-fault insurance before the legislation is passed. That shows you the arrogance of this government, a cocksure government that figures it is all wrapped up with the bull.

Bill Henry is a businessman in Owen Sound. He is behind the opposition to this time allocation motion 100 per cent.

You know, you have got more people coming in here all the time, Mr Speaker. The people of Ontario and the people of Metropolitan Toronto should know that Queen's Park is going to be open all night. There is going to be room in the members' gallery for a whole lot of them, and their presence right here at a quarter to one and at one o'clock and at 1:30 and two o'clock is oh so important to all of us. There is something important happening here right now and you know it, Mr Speaker. It is happening here right now and you know it. These good people sitting here in these galleries know it and the people calling in on the phone to 965-1224 know it too.

On 15 January 1990, I have got to tell you, the general government committee—it was never intended to be. The Minister of Financial Institutions—and we are talking about legislation that was only introduced in the fall of 1989—had promised the insurance industry that it was going to be passed before December 20. The minister of Financial Institutions—

Mr R. F. Johnston: Mr Speaker, I would like to see whether there is a quorum to hear this important speech.

The Acting Speaker: There has been a call for a quorum.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals: A quorum is present, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: It has been brought to my attention that a quorum is present, so we have no alternative but to allow the member for Welland-Thorold to continue.

Mr Kormos: Listen for just a moment, Mr Speaker. Remember what happened back in January of 1990? As I told you, the Liberals had no intention in November—Mr Speaker, you and I were in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, for two days in November 1989. The general government committee was never intended to be. As I told you, the Minister of Financial Institutions—I have got to move this chair out of the way because I need a little bit of room here, Mr Speaker—promised the insurance industry that Bill 68 was going to be passed before the Christmas break, that Bill 68 was going to be passed before December 20, 1989.

He did not announce it to the Legislature; we read it in the newspapers. We said, "No, we won't let the Liberals get away with that nonsense, not as long as we are in opposition, not as long as we can talk and walk and breathe." So we leaned on them, we leaned on the Liberals a whole lot. But they have got this incredible majority. You know, Mr Speaker, sometimes that gets depressing, does it not? Sometimes it gets real depressing, because it is an arrogant and supercilious majority.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: The problem with dictionaries, Mr Speaker, is that they are only of value to people who know how to read.

We are talking about a general government committee that was never intended to be. We finally forced it out of the Liberals.

Mr Speaker, it is a quarter to one in the morning. We have been talking now since six o'clock.

Michael Sands calls in from Toronto. Michael Sands says he would like to register his appreciation. He says, "Mr Smith Goes to Washington doesn't hold a candle." To boot, I think that was in black and white; this is in colour. Mr Smith Goes to Washington, a great Capra film, but if I remember correctly, it was in black and white. Is that correct, Mr Speaker? And this is in colour and this is live and people do not have to be watching us on their TVs, because there is room for them in these galleries right here at Queen's Park, right here this morning, through until one o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock. It sounds like an old Bill Haley song, does it not?

0050

But I tell you there is room for those folks right here at Queen's Park all night, all morning, and if one of them would please bring in an early edition of the Globe and Mail or the Toronto Star, I have got some people here who would love to have it, because the fact is that New Democrats can chew gum and walk at the same time.

Terry Binee from Sioux Lookout phones in: "All power to you. Don't give in."

John MacDonald from the Beaches, "You've got all our support."

Steve Tanner from Sudbury, a college student from Sudbury living in Toronto, called in at 965-1224, and it took him a while. I just know that one of my colleagues sitting with me here is going to give me the other number.

Helen Brown in Welland, Grace Brown, Robert Brown, Robert Brown Jr and Brenda Brown—the whole family is up. They are watching TV. It would be nice if they could be here, but Welland is, what, a 90-minute drive? Bless them.

Steve Tanner from Sudbury wants to know if David Peterson will buy his car when Steve cannot afford to drive because of auto insurance costs. I do not think so. You see, the problem is the Premier is a millionaire. That is not a big secret. The Premier is a millionaire.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: Well, he is. The fact is that the Premier did not have to earn that million bucks; he inherited it.

Mr Speaker, at this time, I move adjournment of the House, it being slightly before 1 am.

The Acting Speaker: Let me see. The honourable member for Welland-Thorold has moved, not the adjournment of the debate, but the adjournment of the House. Now, I have to think about this for a minute. Yes, I think that is in order. If you would you like to speak to that, you can speak to that.

Mr R. F. Johnston: That is not debatable according to the standing orders.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: I think that is correct. Well, you see, I will tell you, this is the trouble when we sit this late, because the Speaker's mind gets a little foggy. We will hear the House leader.

Hon Mr Ward: I would suggest that the motion is not in order. The member has already, on other occasions, moved adjournment.

Interjections.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Mr Speaker, could I speak to the—

The Acting Speaker: Well, I would love you to speak to it, because I have just been waiting with bated breathe.

Mr R. F. Johnston: I was going to say that the government House leader has again confused matters for us and is trying to confuse you, Mr Speaker, as I know you will not be confused. Although it is true that the member has now twice adjourned the debate, after a considerable period of time of debating in this House, he has not, to this point, moved the adjournment of the House, which is his right to do, without any kind of impact on his adjournment of the debate. Such a motion is non-debatable and should be put to this House at this time.

The Acting Speaker: That being the case, the motion is in order. I have no alternative.

0124

The House divided on Mr Kormos's motion, which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 10; nays 36.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member's motion, much to my surprise, has been defeated. What are you going to do now?

Mr Kormos: I am going to carry on.

The Acting Speaker: It being almost 1:30 in the morning, I thought someone would like to know that we are discussing, under orders of the day, item 51, resuming the adjourned debate on government notice of motion 30 on time allocation—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: When you are the Speaker, you will be able to do what you want to do. I am the Speaker, so I can do what I want to do. It is going to be a long morning, I can see that—An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: I was carrying on and was interrupted and I finished off.

Mr R. F. Johnson: We are on a time allocation motion, and that is what we are discussing. It would be very good if you could read it all.

The Acting Speaker: Sorry. Resuming the adjourned debate on government notice of motion 30 on time allocation in relation to Bill 68—I did miss that; I am sorry—An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance.

Mr Kormos: I tell you, Mr Speaker, phone calls are coming in. People are calling us at 965-1224. People are phoning right here at Queen's Park. Mr Speaker, get your pen ready because more people have called. People are calling 965-1239 and 965-1224.

A young fellow, Mike Ellis, vice-president of the Young Liberals in Markham—his mother, Sandra, called. She, Mike, Marlene, Stephanie Ellis and Kristin Snelgrove, five life-long Liberals, are voting New Democrat in the next election because they do not want to have anything to do with time allocation and with Bill 68. This young fellow was the vice-president of the Young Liberals in Markham, and he and his family will have no more to do with Liberals in Ontario.

Mrs Connelly calls from Stratford. Her member, she says, has lost four Liberal votes. She is concerned for their children, as most people are who witness this disdain for democracy.

Rick Alakas calls from Welland with his support. I tell you, Mr Speaker, Rick is a working guy. I know Rick. He is a working guy, a factory worker. He knows what premiums are all about; he knows what premium increases are all about.

0130

Loni Petrachenko calls from Welland and says, "We're watching."

Stanley Jaskof is a lawyer. He is calling from Hamilton. He thinks insurance companies have been gouging and gouging and gouging.

Rick Bingley in Lanark calls in. Honest, Mr Speaker, Rick Bingley from Lanark phoned in just moments ago and said, "This is what Ontarians get for voting in a majority Liberal government."

David Ashby calls from Welland and he says he wants to move in with the Premier because if his insurance goes up any more he will not be able to afford a car to get to work and David Ashby is hoping maybe the Premier will provide accommodation. The Premier could; the Premier is a millionaire. It is true, the Premier is a millionaire. He inherited it; a heck of a way to acquire a million bucks.

Penny Malinkovitch of Niagara Falls—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: I did not have to say a thing, did I? You know better.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, it may not be important to you, but it is important to me that—I can hear the bells ringing, I can hear those phones ringing, 965-1239. People are phoning, area code 416, 965-1239, and they are phoning 965-1224. We have people sitting right up here in this gallery who came down here to Queen's Park, as is their right, to find out exactly what is happening here. I tell you, Mr Speaker, people across the province are saying, "No way to the Liberals, no way to no-fault."

Owen Ronson of Toronto phones in and wishes us success. He says he watches us every day. Now he is watching us every night too. It is 1:30 in the morning, Friday morning, 27 April.

You know, Mr Speaker, this is not a rerun. Oh, the Liberals are tired old reruns; they are retreads, if you will.

Mr Philip: There's the phone again.

Mr Kormos: I think somebody should hold that door open a little bit so we can hear those telephones ringing back there.

Once again, I tell you, Mr Speaker, we are going to talk about Ralph Nader's comments to the general government committee in just a few minutes, but Owen Ronson from Toronto calls in and wishes us great success. You see, Mr Speaker, those phone calls are important because when those phone calls stop I may just have to sit down. It is as simple as that. If those phone calls stop, we may have to give up the fight.

Laurie Hobbs called from North Bay. She says she is sorry she missed me when I was up there last Friday but she is enjoying watching us do our best to try to stop this time allocation motion.

Downsview calls: They are going to keep watching.

Paul Smith from Kitchener calls this great television. You know, Mr Speaker, what is happening here is great. Why? Because people across Ontario are saying no to the arrogance of the Liberal Party at Queen's Park. People across Ontario are saying, "No way to no-fault." People across Ontario are saying, "Never again to Liberal jackboots here at Queen's Park." Paul Smith from Kitchener calls and says this is great TV. He says he is a Tory but might go NDP. He says, "Keep it up."

The University of Waterloo Ontario New Democratic Party Association says lots of university students are watching. They have special problems with affordability of insurance.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, Carla Bruntsdale phoned up. It is 1:35 in the morning on Friday morning. The people who are watching this at home are watching this live. The people who are watching this are watching this happen live.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Interjections are out of order, particularly if members are not in their own seats.

Mr Kormos: Once again I tell you, Mr Speaker, I take those kinds of interjections as encouragement because I know that when the Liberals start squealing and squawking like that we are hitting close to home. As I told you before, I know that the drilling is hitting close to a nerve, and I appreciate that for a whole lot of Liberals this process is akin to a root canal. But you see, Mr Speaker, the problem is that they are the authors of their own misfortune. They have got choices about whether they are going to support the insurance industry, about whether they are going to support the profits of the insurance industry or indeed whether they are going to support the people, the taxpayers, the drivers and the innocent injured victims here in the province of Ontario. The impression that is being created is that the Liberals have sold out the drivers of Ontario in favour of the interests of a powerful and wealthy auto insurance industry.

Carla Bruntsdale from Toronto calls. Her family has been Liberal all of their lives. No more.

Ken Ridgewall from Windsor says Bill 68 should not pass and he is opposed to this time allocation motion. He understands that the issues are too complex to be dealt with in the simply absurd two afternoons that the Liberal House leader suggests in his motion. So Ken Ridgewall from Windsor phones in and says Bill 68 should not pass. Once again, he says he has always voted Liberal, but not again, never again. I tell you, Mr

Speaker, he is telling you right now that his votes in the future will be with the New Democratic Party.

Do you remember what happened on 15 January 1990, Mr Speaker? This is what I was trying to get around to telling you before. We as a minority in the opposition had a great deal of difficulty getting the Liberals to even have that committee sit. We had a great deal of difficulty even getting the Liberals to have a committee listen to submissions here in the province of Ontario. An you know what, Mr Speaker? It was inevitable that there was just a plethora of submissions to be made to that committee by people from all walks of life.

0140

Interjections.

Mr Mackenzie: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I do not think the members of the House should be subjected to the member opposite, who is drunk as a skunk in this House, interrupting in this Legislature the way he is.

The Speaker: Order. Would the member please withdraw?

Mr Mackenzie: The fact that he is drunk?

The Speaker: Yes, would you please withdraw.

Mr Mackenzie: As long as the public realizes what is going on in here and just how drunk he is, I will withdraw it, Mr Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Kormos: What was happening was that at this general government committee, dominated by Liberals—there were six Liberals on it, and that is what I started telling you about a little while ago, Mr Speaker, six Liberals on this general government committee. It became clear to all of us that the demand by people and organizations and groups and bodies across Ontario to appear in front of this general government committee, the numbers were just going to be overwhelming.

Let me you this: You know that the general government committee sat during the House's break; that is to say, it sat after Christmas, before the House resumed sitting in March 1990. Now what happens when a committee sits during a House break is that the committee members collect their regular MPP salaries but they also get paid extra money every day. They get paid what is called per diems. I do not know what it is, something like \$70 or \$74 a day, plus another \$20 or so for a food allowance, tax-free.

So these committee members are collecting their full MPP salaries plus grabbing another \$100 or so a day, give or take a few bucks, but that is tax-free. Now the good people down in Welland-Thorold who work at Union Carbide, who work at General Motors in St Catharines, who work at the Tubes, who work at the tire plant, at General Tire, they do not make \$100 tax-free in a day. Do not forget what I told you: that is above and beyond MPPs' regular salaries. But it is there.

We in the opposition prevailed upon the Liberal majority to please sit, because the committee was only going to sit four days a week, Monday through Thursday. But then the committee was only going to sit Monday afternoons. I said: "I don't understand. You've got hundreds and hundreds of individuals and organizations that want to appear before this committee to make submissions about Bill 68. Each and every one of us is being paid an extra \$100 or so a day, tax-free, and you don't want to start this committee sitting until 1:30 or two o'clock in the afternoon and then you want to fold it up at five in the

afternoon. Well, that it just not kosher. It does not wash with me.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: Mr. Speaker, there is a temper tantrum going on here. It is incredible.

The Speaker: Order. Will the member for York Mills withdraw?

Mr J. B. Nixon: May I elaborate? Withdraw what?

The Speaker: Accusing the member of making misleading remarks.

Mr J. B. Nixon: With regret, yes.

Mr Kormos: I had just got the colouring book and crayons for him. I figured he was having a temper tantrum and he needed something to occupy him. The crayons are non-toxic, so if he happens to chew on the end of one or two of them, he is not going to suffer any physical ill effects. If he acts up again, we will send the colouring book and crayons over and it will cool his jets a little.

Mr Philip: He had a bad day at sandbox therapy.

Mr Kormos: Perhaps a bad day in sandbox therapy.

Once again, when I witness those types of temper tantrums here in the assembly, it encourages me, because it means that we are getting through. It means that the arguments we are making against this time allocation motion are starting to reach home. That is what it means.

Let me tell you once again about this standing committee on general government. We asked the committee to please sit Monday mornings. The Liberal majority would not permit it. We asked the committee to please consider sitting in the evenings so that working people could appear before that committee and make submissions. The committee would not. It has used its majority—thank you, sir.

Janet McCarten and her husband, John, from Midland have been watching for weeks. They say, "Keep up the good work." They do not want this time allocation motion to pass.

Ron Johnson from St Catharines—

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: I feel forced into reading each and every one. A man from Owen Sound called to voice his displeasure with the Liberals. He said that Eddie Sargent always stood up for the little guy, but not the Premier. He asks, "How can things open up in eastern Europe yet close down here at Queen's Park?" That is an interesting question.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Yes, how can it be that things can be opening up in eastern Europe but shutting down here?

Ron Johnson from St Catharines calls in. He is opposed to Bill 68.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: See what is happening, Mr Speaker? These phone callers are getting to the Liberals. It is driving them crazy.

Donna Harriet and Cathy McMillan call in from St Catharines, "Keep up the good work."

Eric and Suzanne James call in from London. They want us to keep up the good work.

Arlene Rousseau—this is the second time that Arlene Rousseau has called in. She called in several days ago. She calls in from Windsor and says her assessment of her Liberal member there is that he is on his way out.

Wayne Archer calls in from Collingwood and says that he does not know where the Liberals got the mandate to jam this down our throats. He says they will not get a majority next time. That is an interesting comment from Wayne Archer.

Four voters from Burlington: "Keep it up, you're doing a fine job." Another message: "Right on."

Terry Jenkins from Ottawa is deathly against Bill 68 and even more so against closure. Here is Terry Jenkins from Ottawa, who is really close to the closure motions that the Tories are ramming through that Parliament in an effort to get the GST passed. Their clones, the Liberals down here at Queen's Park, are using closure to ram through Bill 68. You have to understand that Terry Jenkins knows what is going on, Mr Speaker.

0150

Why will the Liberals not listen to Terry Jenkins from Ottawa? Why will they not listen to Cathy McMillan from St Catharines? Why will they not listen to Arlene Rousseau from Windsor? Why will they not listen to Wayne Archer from Collingwood? Why will the Liberals not listen to these good people? Because they are not insurance company executives, that is why. These are working people. People from all over Ontario are telling the Liberals that they are not going to tolerate jackboot politics here at Queen's Park.

Darcy Scott phones in from Toronto—could be related to a cabinet minister. He calls in, "What could be more undemocratic than millions of drivers being screwed—skewered"—that is what he has here, not screwed; I misread that—"by a handful of insurance companies?"

Dick Foster from Scarborough calls up—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos: Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity, as you well know, Mr Speaker. I am encouraged and buoyed up by the rattling, ranting and raving coming from the Liberal back benches. These guys are squealing because the pressure is on. The problem is that there is some squealing coming from the back benches. I do not know what he had for supper, but it sure as heck does not agree with him.

Ron Broughton from Welland calls up. Because of them, Ron may not be able to afford car insurance next year.

Joe Petty calls. He did a poll, and I am not going to suggest that this is an Environics poll; of course it is not. Joe Petty is not on the Liberal—

An hon member: Payroll.

Mr Kormos: —mailing list and payroll, but where Joe Petty comes from, his poll of 1,000 people shows 968 who will not vote Liberal.

Linda Frisky calls in to ask, "Why won't the Liberals listen?" Linda Frisky is just like Joe Petty and Ron Broughton. Linda Frisky and Rick Albarico and Diane Milligan keep saying that one little voice counts. They say, "Please keep calling." Linda Frisky calls and she says—

Interjection.

The Speaker: The member for Port Arthur, any more?

Mr Kozyra: I'm sorry.

The Speaker: No more.

Mr Kormos: John Bisson, Welland, calls in to say that he is behind us 100 per cent.

Frank Cameron from Etobicoke is talking about time allocation. We are not talking about Bill 68, because we cannot. We are not talking about the auto insurance scheme that the auto insurance industry wants implemented here in Ontario, because we cannot. We are not talking about the threshold system that the Liberals imported from the United States of America, because we cannot.

Do you understand what I am saying? The Liberals will not let us. The Liberals have this time allocation motion on the floor that prevents us from talking about Bill 68.

You know, Mr Speaker, all we ever wanted to do was debate Bill 68, but the Minister of Financial Institutions and his gang, his chorus line here in the front row, the tired old chorus line of has-beens, would-bes and wannabes—you know what a wannabe is, do you not, Mr Speaker?—the Minister of Financial Institutions and the Premier of Ontario and all of their has-beens and wannabes do not want us to talk about Bill 68 and the last thing in the world they want to do is debate it.

Frank Cameron in Etobicoke is one of I am sure up to 1,000 people now who have called in just as this debate has resumed tonight. He is one of 1,000 people who have called to say that this time allocation motion is just plain downright unconscionable.

A lady in her 60s calls in from Kitchener. She says, "My husband and I should have been in bed hours ago," but she waited until she got through on the phone lines. "If premiums go up as much as Bill 68 will mean, that is a simple matter of fewer people will be able to drive."

As you know, Mr Speaker, especially hard hit are going to be the senior citizens, are they not? We know because of what we learned, well, in the Thursday 12 April 1990 edition of the Toronto Star, and this is what the lady in her 60s from Kitchener—and God bless her for staying up late so that she can get her call through, and she has every right, because you want to know, Mr Speaker, what that lady from Kitchener is talking about?

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Kormos: The lady from Kitchener is talking about the fact that 300,000 drivers will face 80 per cent more for insurance. The Toronto Star article by Nancy Wood—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I caution all members to be careful of their language.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, sir.

Mr Philip: Here's some more, Peter.

Mr Kormos: Thanks, Ed.

Mr Charlton: Read them all.

Mr Kormos: John Anderson calls in from Toronto with congratulations.

Mr Charlton: Read them all.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, I am being invited to read them all, and boy oh boy, we are going to read every one of these, every single one of them.

Gary Wilson from Kingston says, don't worry, he and other viewers will pick up the fight when I stop.

Do you know where this fight is going to go to? This fight is going to go to the ballot box. This fight is going to go to the ballot box, because you want to know something, Mr Speaker? The people in Ontario will not forget what this government is doing to them right now, this very moment. Gary Wilson from Kingston says, don't worry, he and other viewers will pick up the fight when we stop.

Elizabeth Greer from Cardiff Drive calls in with her support.

Michael Perron calls from Welland, and once again, I think this is the second time Mike Perron has made it through tonight. He sends in his 100 per cent support. The message for the Liberals is, "Get your golf-clubs out, you're done, just like the Leafs."

You know what, Mr Speaker? There are going to be a whole lot of Liberals who are going to have a whole lot of time to improve their golf game if they insist on ramming this Bill 68 through, because boy oh boy, they ain't going to get re-elected.

Really, I suppose you have got to wonder. Perhaps that is an unfair thing to say, because I bet there are a whole lot of good golfers over there. Lord knows, they do not pay a heck of a lot of attention to running the government, do they? I mean, they are letting the insurance industry run this shot, so you cannot really—they have got a lot of time on their hands. The Liberal backbenchers have got an awful lot of time on their hands, so I suppose they have a good golf game.

0200

Here is a lady who says from her husband and herself, from Cambridge, "Congratulations."

Frank Kutzy from Kitchener phones up and says, "No-fault insurance, the way the Liberals have sure got it planned, and the insurance industry in Ontario, is going to end up like the WCB, a mess." Now Mr Kutzy is a seriously doubting Liberal, sort of like a doubting Thomas; this is a doubting Liberal.

Alec Economides from East York calls up and says, "Congratulations, you're doing a fine job."

Here is one, a regular viewer 100 miles north of North Bay: "Liberals are making the cost of everything go up. Make them stop." To those folks 100 miles north of North Bay I say we are doing our very best.

An interesting insight from Mrs Mullens. She phones in and says we have her blessing: "Fight these immature Liberals all the way." Mrs Mullens, we know that. That is why we bring toys like the colouring books and crayons for the Liberals to occupy themselves when they get a little rowdy. We have had to give these out before, and we have got a few sets left and there are a few Liberals here who are going to qualify for colouring books and crayons of their very own before much time goes by.

You know, Mr Speaker, somebody asked me why we are filibustering, and I have had to explain to them this is not a filibuster. This is not a filibuster, because here in Canada, here in Ontario, you cannot filibuster. I mean, more than one Speaker has told me that right here in this assembly. You cannot filibuster here in the province of Ontario. It is something that is alien to the parliamentary system.

What you can do is debate, once you have got the floor. That is why this is my last chance to persuade 29 Liberals to vote against this time allocation motion, but I am not filibustering.

I looked up filibuster in the Oxford English dictionary. It said, "to obstruct, to delay." It is the Liberals who are obstructing, it is the Liberals who are delaying, because we say the order of the day clearly, and the sense of fairness among On-

tarians is that Bill 68 ought to be debated. But it is the Liberals who are obstructing the debate about Bill 68, so you see, we are not filibustering. It is the Liberals who are filibustering. We are just trying to perform our job as members of this Legislative Assembly. That is all we are trying to do. I tell you that right now.

People have asked us, what do we hope to achieve? Well, ask those people who telephone us at 965-1239. Ask those people who telephone us at 965-1239, or those people who call us at 965-1224.

What do we hope to achieve? I tell you, Mr Speaker, we know that it will only take 29 Liberals voting against this time allocation motion to defeat it. We hope to persuade 29 Liberals that they like their jobs good enough to vote against time allocation so that we can have a full debate about Bill 68.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for reminding me as often as you have what the rules are. I know that I cannot stand here and simply read text. In the United States, in a system where filibustering is considered apropos, people are permitted to do that, but here in Ontario, one cannot simply stand and read a text. You know what I mean. You cannot stand and read the Bible, no matter how much you would like to. It probably would be good for all of us for me to stand up here and read a little bit of the Bible. I cannot stand here and ready Mark Twain, let's say. That is not what is permitted.

You know that I have to remain on topic, and you know, Mr Speaker, that the Speaker's chair will reign me back in when I stray off. I appreciate that. You know that I have to work real hard to develop a series of arguments that obviously, from the point of view of debate, have some relationship one to the other but at the same time are not merely repetitive. Again, I appreciate you, Mr Speaker, in your assistance and in your guidance in avoiding mere repetition.

Look at what is going on here right now. There is not a single Tory, not a single Conservative, and there has not been one for a good chunk of time. There is a smattering of Liberals. Not even both of the siblings grim are here. Only one of the siblings grim is here. That is the Liberal whip. There he is. He just jack-in-the-boxed. Both of the siblings grim are here. Here I am with three of my colleagues in the New Democratic Party, and there we have, at 2:05 am on a Friday morning, more than a good handful of folks sitting up there in the visitors' galleries.

If one had to describe the House at two o'clock in the morning, there have been moments in the course of this evening and early morning when there have been more spectators than there have been Liberals sitting in the House.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: People are heckling. People are egging me on. Why, I suspect that more than the occasional member, and I suppose from any number of caucuses, may well have dozed off at least for the briefest of moments. Those things happen. What happens is that there is just an incredible wave of support coming from the public across Ontario, just phone calls and phone calls and phone calls and phone calls. The fact that people come here to Queen's Park at one and two in the morning to watch this debate take place indicates that the interest is widespread.

Mr Charlton: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The government whip has pointed out that there are not very many members in the House. You could check for a quorum, perhaps.

Mr Speaker ordered the bells rung.

0210

Mr Kormos: That is a little bit better. It is a little bit better. I have no difficulty about where my colleagues in the New Democratic Party stand on this matter. I know that they are going to vote against this time allocation motion. I want to know where they are going to vote. We have no hesitation about how they are going to vote.

Interjections.

An hon member: Is it true that Bob Rae said—

Mr Charlton: Did you ask the people up there?

Mr Ballinger: Ask the people in Ontario.

An hon member: That is who are sitting up there, my friend.

Mr Ballinger: Get serious. Come on.

Mr Kormos: Who is that member? Darn it. I keep forgetting where that member is from because he does not make a whole lot of impression in the House. Durham-York. The member for Durham-York dismisses those people in the gallery. Those people will perhaps take that message back to Durham-York and let their relatives, their friends and their business associates know in Durham-York just exactly what is going on.

What kind of roadblocks have been put in our way? That has been asked of me. I do not know. I guess the Liberals have done just about everything they could. I know they are getting sort of panicky and frustrated and I know some of their own backbenchers were starting to grumble about how come their House leader was not doing anything about me. They were starting to feel some of the pain and pressure of people across Ontario, just like this newest collection of telephone messages.

Ray Harris from Hamilton, Ontario, phones: "Fight the good fight. Don't let them pincer off a piece of our common law." Ray Harris from Hamilton has that to say.

Carson Sears from Cambridge calls in. He says, "Keep up the good work."

David Scott from Keswick, Ontario, calls. He does not understand how the Liberals can pander to the insurance companies.

An hon member: Isn't he the brother of the Attorney General?

Mr Kormos: I do not know what relationship he is to the Attorney General. David Scott from Keswick.

Tony Pellaggi from Toronto calls and says, "Keep going."

Tommy Glesby calls in from Welland. Do you want to know something, Mr Speaker? Tommy Glesby is a fighter too. Tommy Glesby represented Canada as a boxer in the Seoul Olympics. He is somebody about whom we are very proud down in Welland-Thorold. He is a fine young man, a fine young athlete and a fighter par excellence. Tommy Glesby calls in, a young guy who has a great future—he may well be watching with his dad Bill and his little brother Bill Jr—and says he is 100 per cent behind me.

I cannot think of anybody whom I would be more pleased to see with us than Tommy Glesby, a young Olympic fighter, somebody who has represented this country and represented it well. You might remember those boxing matches over in Seoul and the feistiness and just overwhelming talent of that young boy.

Lawrence Hall from Mississauga calls. He is very opposed to Bill 68.

Some people have asked me am I worried that I am trivializing the issue. Some people have asked me that. The answer is no, I am not worried about that, but I suppose that calls for a second level of inquiry. When I stand back and look at it, notwithstanding that I do not worry about it, do I regard myself, being as candid as one can be about oneself, as trivializing the issue? I say no. I say that if I ever felt that way, I would be persuaded to the contrary by the number of people who are sitting here in the galleries at 2:15 in the morning and the hundreds and hundreds of phone calls we have received tonight and early this morning alone.

Mr Speaker, it is incredible. I dare say that you, as a Speaker, have never seen anything like this, the people phoning 965-1239 to encourage us to carry on this debate, and the people phoning 965-1224. I can hear the phones ringing from where I am. The people of Ontario would dissuade me from ever suspecting that I am trivializing the issue.

We are talking about a time allocation motion. We are talking about an effort on the part of the Liberal majority here at Queen's Park to stifle, to snuff out opposition and debate. I tell you, Mr Speaker, that debate, the role of parliamentarians, the role of members of the opposition, is so important that we are not going to relinquish it without as complete a fight as we can muster.

When I watch young boxers like Tommy Glesby fight, win as often as they can and lose some—no boxer is any less an athlete by virtue of ever having lost a fight—I say to you, Mr Speaker, no, I do not worry about trivializing the issue. I worry about the Liberals snuffing out democracy.

Charlotte Smagata, the Smagata family in Welland, calls in. She and her daughter were badly injured in a car accident in September. She knows that if it had happened after this legislation was passed, they would not have the compensation available to them that is going to be made available to them now.

A call came in in support for us from an insurance adjuster. He says that the companies are behind Bill 68, and suggests that companies are behind this time allocation motion too because the companies have a strong interest in making sure that Bill 68 is not thoroughly debated. He says the companies are behind it, but the employees are not. He was a Liberal; not any more.

There are more phone calls coming in. These are people who are giving me the energy to stay on my feet and keep on talking. Anna Kuker calls, says thanks for the conviction and the commitment. I wish she would not use the word "conviction." I could live with just the word "commitment," but I understand what Anna Kuker is saying. I appreciate it very much. We appreciate it. The Liberals should be listening.

Steve French from Scarborough calls in. One hundred per cent support; that is what he said. Walter Thompson from Etobicoke. Continue on, he says.

Back on 15 January, Ralph Nader appeared before the general government committee. His commentary alone on Bill 68 and what it means to Ontarians justifies and in fact defines and gives shape to our cry for a full debate. One of the things that he pointed out he raised as a preliminary. He raised this at the very onset. He said first—this is important because one of the critiques by the Minister of Financial Institutions of Ralph Nader was that Ralph Nader was an American. He says that the threshold system that the Minister of Financial Institutions is trying to force on some people here in Ontario a very American system, very American.

Ralph Nader came up from the United States to appear before the general government committee. You know who Ralph Nader is, Mr Speaker. Ralph Nader is a leading consumer

advocate, I dare say not just a leading American consumer advocate, but probably a leading North American consumer advocate, and perhaps a worldwide acknowledged consumer advocate. Ralph Nader has taken on General Motors and Ford and the big corporations in the United States and other places. Ralph Nader is a fearless crusader for the rights of consumers.

0220

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: He came up here to talk about what Bill 68 is going to mean to drivers, taxpayers and innocent injured victims here in Ontario. He was well aware of the criticism that had been levelled against him.

Indeed, some of the not very creative heckling, in fact pretty pathetic heckling—that is why I am glad there are folks here, because the TV camera really does not give you an impression of what is going on—I hear those telephones ringing; it is incredible—the TV cameras do not give a real impression of the fact that what we have is lacklustre heckling. We are talking lacklustre. We are talking seedy.

Remember what Ralph Nader opened with when he appeared before the general government committee a week after the Minister of Financial Institutions unloaded his—Mr Nader said, “First, I would like to indicate the interrelationship of the issues before this committee and similar issues in the United States and hope that some of the experience in the United States can be helpful.”

Now this is what the important part is. This is very important because Nader was very conscious of the fact that what is happening here in Ontario is being watched very closely by many American jurisdictions.

Mr Speaker, I said a long time ago that I was going to loosen my tie at 1 am. Here it is, 2:20 in the morning and here I am with the tie-knot still tight. I tell you what, Mr Speaker, I am going to loosen it and I am going to undo my top button. There, that is a little more casual. Wow. That is like being reborn. Why, what a rush of energy. I told you, 10 o'clock tomorrow morning, Mr Speaker—it has been eight and a half hours now. I think we will go on for a long, long, long time.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: The people up here hear that nasal nattering, and I can see some of them—it is as if somebody is dragging his fingernails along a chalkboard.

Here are more of these, Mr Speaker. Mike Perron called back. He said, “You need a third line, you need a fourth line, maybe you need five lines to handle all the calls. You probably do.”

Christine Mayne calls in from Eglinton and Yonge. She says that this government move forcing people to work long hours is bad for health and safety. I tell you this, the government move and its support for Bill 68 and its support for time allocation is bad for its longevity. You cannot expect a long lifespan when you are supporting jackboot tactics.

Bruce Henderson from Burlington calls, a lifelong Liberal, but he promises this: He has been a lifelong Liberal, but if Bill 68 does through, that is it. It is like hundreds and hundreds and thousands of other people.

Nick Trombetta calls in from Mississauga and he says, “Great fight, keep it up.” Here are more phone calls that have just come in, Mr Speaker. Mr Husexin Kудay—and I think, Mr Speaker, you would find that is an interesting name and I hope I am pronouncing it well—calls in, “Liberals cannot be heroes without the people and they are ignoring the people.” They are.

Mildred Flowers, a senior citizen from Hamilton. Mildred or Michael Flowers? Mildred Flowers, a senior citizen from Hamilton sends deepest respect to us.

Steve Doan from Wallaceburg, Ontario. I know the family name because we have a lot of Doans living in Welland; they are good people. I do not know whether Steve Doan is related to the Welland Doans or not; he lives in Wallaceburg. He went to Tim Horton's tonight, everybody was talking about this issue. He wishes that his member would hear the message. Steve Doan called in and wishes his Liberal member would hear the message.

Sean King from Oshawa says he speaks for 15 people when he says, “Keep it up.” Will the Liberals pay for his transportation when he can no longer afford to drive? So Sean King from Oshawa, there you are.

Paul Barrett from Agincourt says, “I want to drive my car in Toronto.” He supports this opposition to time allocation because you see that is—once again, these people understand far better than the Liberals sitting here do, how important it is to have full debate.

Tom Moase from London. “Keep up the good work,” he says. “Unprogressive Liberals”—that is what he calls this government. He says they are a disgrace.

David Russel Kinner, a York University student, says, “Keep up the fight. Bill 68 scares a lot of people just as a debate or the prospect of a debate scares the daylight out of the Liberals.”

Todd Jameson from Cambridge says, “Keep on going.” He is an ex-employee of Wardair.

Jim Smerdon of St Catharines calls in and says, “This debate should be considered as a referendum on Bill 68.” Jim Smerdon of St Catharines says he was a Liberal, but as of tonight, he is no longer.

0230

Tom McGahey is the secretary-treasurer of Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 794 in Hamilton. He phoned in with his support. Do you know something? I bet he speaks for a whole lot of people.

Dick Foster from Scarborough calls in. He says, “Keep up the good work.”

Again, I tell members, if it were not for people phoning in like they have been, we just would not have the energy to carry on with this discussion. It is as simple as that.

Darryl Goudreau from Sudbury calls in and says, “Kill Bill 68.”

Mitch Tyler calls in from London. He says, “Thanks to the good work of the New Democrats the voters may yet see the last of that evasive little”—we will leave that as it is. In any event, Mitch Tyler from London—and I appreciate very much Mr Tyler's comments, but the problem is that there is a comment here describing, I guess, some London member that would be unparliamentary.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: I will tell members what he said. He says, “The voters may yet see the last of that evasive little”—he is talking about someone who is relatively short.

Bob Sterling from Oakville calls in. Bob Sterling says that the opposition is doing a tremendous job and the government should be put in its place. The government's place should be over here in the third party's status. That is where the Liberals may well end up if they keep on carrying on with this crummy

time allocation motion. He is in the trucking business. Most truckers are opposed to this legislation.

Jean and her husband Roy called from St Catharines. Jean and Roy say: "We're behind you all the way. We've always been Liberals, but now we are not so sure." Jean and her husband Roy from St Catharines say, "What are the Liberals afraid of?"

It is people like Barry Edson who have long-time documented careers in the Liberal Party who have written letters dumping the party. The very best he can say is, "Say hello to my Liberal ex-friends here at Queen's Park."

Ross Battle calls in from Welland, 100 per cent behind us. He has been following the debate for a week. We know that because Ross Battle called in last week.

Herman Turkstra was another author of another lengthy and eloquent letter.

Greg Hemple from Port Dalhousie calls in. Greg Hemple has been watching for eight hours and that is pretty good because I have been speaking for around eight and a half. Greg Hemple from Port Dalhousie calls in and says that he is never going to vote Liberal after this.

Bill Cox from Bruce Mines says: "Liberals are not listening to their constituents. See you at the polls."

Gail from Haileybury calls this evening. She telephoned through because there were people answering the phones at 965-1239. She says that we are fighting for the ordinary people.

Isaac Chung from North York phones in with 100 per cent support.

A lady calls in from Kingston. She did not leave her name, but she says, "Peter, we have a dictatorship in Ottawa; we don't need one in Toronto."

Brian Adset calls from Burlington. He says that the Liberal member for his riding—that is the House leader—refused to debate this bill in the riding. Brian Adset says that he is not about to vote Liberal or for that member again.

Paul Russell from Toronto says that he cannot afford to live here, cannot afford to drive here. What next?

I have to say that I would be getting tired now if people were not phoning in. I would be getting tired and I would feel compelled to give up if people were not phoning in. That is why we have people answering the phones at 965-1239. There are people answering those phones right now and I know that sometimes it takes 30 minutes, sometimes 60 minutes, sometimes longer to get through. People have told us that. But I am so grateful and, more importantly, the taxpayers and the drivers of Ontario are all that much more grateful for those phone calls. So the people who call at 965-1239—I hear the telephone ringing more and more and more. That of course is area code 416. We are here in Toronto at Queen's Park at 965-1239. Of course, the other number they can call is 965-1224.

All I can tell them is that we appreciate their calls. Their calls are a real source of energy to me. People like the member for York South and other members of the NDP caucus are answering those phones right now at 2:35 in the morning here at Queen's Park.

Mr Philip: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: do you recognize a quorum?

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

0239

The Acting Speaker: I am advised that a quorum is present.

Mr Kormos: You will remember, Mr Speaker, that—gosh, when was it—last week we gave away a copy of the book *One Hundred Monkeys* to Chuck Bougie of Terrace Bay. We gave away a copy of a videotape of last Thursday's debate to a Barrie resident for sending in his torn-up Liberal membership card.

I mentioned this a couple of times. I have an autographed copy of this book called *The Tabloid Zone*, Mr Speaker. I want you to have a copy of it because it is written by William J. Thomas, who is a prominent columnist here in the province of Ontario carried by quite a number of newspapers, written several books of Leacockian humour, and a screenwriter. I suppose the most decent thing he did was the script for the made-in-Canada TV movie about the development of the *Trivial Pursuit* game. So from William J. Thomas an autographed copy of William J. Thomas's book *The Tabloid Zone*. It is a collection of among his most humorous columns.

I tell you that it is superseded shortly by a book about Malcolm his cat. Bill Thomas wrote the other day—and you might have heard that right here at Queen's Park during members' statements I read some lengthy excerpts from Bill Thomas's letter to me about his awareness of how important pets are, especially to seniors. Remember? Bill Thomas had some really harsh things to say about politicians who would not protect the rights of seniors to keep pets in their homes. He was talking about seniors who were in, let's say, housing designed for them, or private corporate apartments, who are deprived of the opportunity to keep pets. So he is an incredible guy, an incredible writer, an incredible humorist.

I have an autographed copy of *The Tabloid Zone* to the—why this book is remarkable, because one of the features in it is the article "Dancing with the Four-Armed Man." If there ever was a Liberal, he is undoubtedly the four-armed man, because he can manage to pick your front pockets, your back pockets, take your wallet, your watch and grab you by the ankles, turn you upside down and shake every last nickel and dime out of you. That is so characteristic of the Liberals here in Ontario.

So "Dancing with the Four-Armed Man" is a very appropriate thing to give away in this context of an arrogant Liberal majority. Do not forget the number is 29, we need 29 Liberal backbenchers to vote against this time allocation motion. So the 29th phone call that mentions *The Tabloid Zone* will get a free copy, autographed, of *The Tabloid Zone* by William J. Thomas, and you will enjoy it. Bill Thomas and *The Tabloid Zone* to the 29th caller, the 29th caller who calls in at 965-1239. Do not forget, that number is 965-1239, or at 965-1224. So we have a whole bunch of phone messages here, but the 29th message to mention *The Tabloid Zone* gets a free copy of an autographed *The Tabloid Zone* by William J. Thomas, a scriptwriter, screenwriter and author.

Domenic Velluci is not voting Liberal again. He phones in with his 100 per cent support. That was Domenic Velluci who just called. John Battaglio from Greenville calls in and the message is started, "By the time this bird government is finished"—I suspect that the person taking the message felt that the balance of it was going to be unparliamentary, in any event.

Mr Philip: What's a bird government?

Mr Kormos: I am just cautious. I would not want to say anything uncomplimentary about the government—unparliamentary. That is not my style, Mr Speaker, you know that. It is not my style.

Peter North from Oshawa says: "Please don't give up. They won't either."

Mr Philip: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Is there a quorum?

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

0247

The Acting Speaker: I have been advised that a quorum is present. So, who has the floor?

Mr Kormos: I do, Mr Speaker. I have the floor. The reason I got it is the people who are phoning in. If it were not for these phone calls, if it were not for the fact that the Liberals know that people are watching right now, they would find some way to shut me up. They would find some way to shut me down, but they cannot as long as they know that people are watching. We can show to them that people are watching because of the phone calls we are getting. Is that not right?

Ron Deslauriers from Onaping calls in. He has been watching since he got home from the afternoon shift. He has been watching this as long as you have, Mr Speaker. You and Ron Deslauriers have a lot more in common than you think. He has been watching since he got home from the afternoon shift. He says: "This is history in the making. The Liberals should stop hiding behind the numbers and start debating." All we have ever wanted to do was debate Bill 68, and the Liberals will not let us. That is what this time allocation motion is all about.

Dave Allen from Toronto calls and says: "Don't give up. If you don't, we won't."

Audrey Carey calls us from St Catharines this evening. It is quarter to three in the morning. This is Friday 27 April 1990. Audrey Carey calls from St Catharines, says, "Stomp on those Liberals." No, no. You see, it is they who have the jackboots. It is they who want to snuff out democracy. So Audrey Carey calls in. She knows what is important. I have a feeling that Audrey Carey has lost any confidence that she ever might have had in the Liberals here at Queen's Park. Do you know that, Mr Speaker? I suspect that Audrey Carey has lost any confidence she ever might have had in the Premier of Ontario and the Attorney General, in the House leader, in the whip, in the Minister of Financial Institutions. I am sure that she has lost all confidence that she ever had.

Ms Duquette calls from North Bay. She says: "Pete, keep up the good work. Somebody has to stop them."

Gail and Phil Rash from Unionville said they have been to three information meetings about Bill 68. The insurance companies simply did not show up. That has sort of been my experience, because I have been to a whole lot of information meetings about Bill 68, and the Liberals never show up. They do not want to debate Bill 68 here at Queen's Park; they do not want to debate it out in communities across the province either. That is what this time allocation motion is all about, their refusal to debate Bill 68.

Jay Rotman says he wishes the Liberals had given more thought to Bill 68. Lawrence Hall asks, "Are the Liberals going to pay for my full-body armour?" Gail and Phil Rash in Unionville, Ms Duquette in North Bay, Lawrence Hall, Peter North in Oshawa, John Battaglio from Greenville, Dominic Velluci, these are all people whom the Liberals will not listen to, because they are not insurance company executives. To the Liberals of Ontario, these good people simply do not count.

Manon Lepaven calls and says she was Liberal. She says Bill 68 is wrong. Bill 68 is simply no good. Why does the Premier, Manon Lepaven asks, refuse to permit a debate about Bill 68? There have been some answers suggested. It is clear now that the overwhelming public opinion is that Bill 68 is bad

legislation and has to be dumped, so it would seem that the Premier is not afraid of what he is going to do to public opinion, because the public in Ontario rejects Bill 68 completely in any event.

What the Premier is afraid of is the fact that there are 29 Liberal backbenchers in his caucus who want to keep their ridings. What the Premier is afraid of is that one, two, three, 15, 20, 25, 27, 28, 29 Liberals, just like the two Tories who broke ranks up on Parliament Hill—I mean, you are talking about sinking ships. There are Liberals here who realize that the water is coming in faster than it can be bailed out. There are 29 Liberals here who can be guaranteed—

Mr Philip: On a point of order, Mr Speaker. I do not believe there is a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: I have been advised that a quorum is present.

Mr Kormos: Does that mean I am on again, Mr Speaker? Manon Lepaven calls in and says she was Liberal, she is not any more. She says, "Bonne chance." I appreciate that. Manon Lepaven says she is going to keep watching. She says this is better than First Choice. You want to know something? She does not have to pay for this, either.

It has been a long night so far, and it is going to be a lot longer. We have a whole lot of Queen's Park staff here who are putting in double and triple duty. They have to be here. Their sense of commitment to their job is that they are simply not going to walk away. These are men and women with families. They have been called away from those families. They do not, as I understand it, have the right to refuse overtime, so it is not a matter of choice on their part.

I suppose to a large extent that is in keeping with the general Liberal approach to workers. Before you know it, this government will have these same workers working on Sundays. This government shows no interest in protecting workers from having to work Sundays. That is clear when it comes to its view on Sunday shopping. So all I want to say, Mr Speaker, is a sincere thank you to the staff here at Queen's Park—the security staff, among others—who are doing double and triple duty. They have shown great patience, they have shown great tolerance and they have managed to maintain a sense of humour throughout what must have been for some, if not most, if not all of them, a tedious past nine hours. So I simply want to say that all of us acknowledge their contribution to this process and thank them for simply being here and acknowledge that it is a hardship for them and their families.

Al Cutler called in at 1:35 this morning from Downsview. He is fearful of the increases that almost one third of a million drivers in this province are going to face if Bill 68 is passed. That is premium increases of up to 80 per cent. He wonders if the decreases are merely for the Liberals. But Al Cutler says to carry on and keep it up. I tell you, we will.

David Fleming called from Collingwood at 2:06 this morning. It is just a couple minutes shy of three o'clock now. Mr Fleming said what a treat it was to watch us try to protect the democratic system.

I tell you, Mr Speaker, people like David Fleming are so important to this process that is taking place here. People like David Fleming are the ultimate watchdogs, are they not? If it were not for people in this province who showed an interest, who showed a passion for justice and fairness, the Liberals would just run roughshod over literally everything. So you see, David Fleming, Al Cutler and Michael Corte—he is from Burlington—these are the people who are the real safeguards in our

society. But you see, these are the same people who the Liberals want to guillotine. These are the same people who the Liberals want to impose their time allocation on. These are the same people who the Liberals want to muzzle, because when you muzzle the opposition, what you are doing is muzzling the voice of the people of Ontario.

Interjection.

0300

Mr Kormos: Sure, the voters, the taxpayers, the drivers and the innocent injured victims. That is who is being muzzled.

Mr Gorham from London calls, and he says his family voted Liberal always. His uncle was a reeve of Bertie township. You know where that is, do you not, Mr Speaker? Down in Niagara. Bertie township has a long, wonderful history. As a matter of fact, just the other night we were up at Niagara-on-the-Lake, where volunteer awards were being given out, five-year, 10-year, 15-year awards. The Minister of the Environment was there on behalf of the Minister of Citizenship. We had a whole bunch of people from Welland-Thorold receiving well-deserved awards, people from Vive-la-Joie, people from the Welland Lacac, people from the Thorold reed band. There were also people from the Bertie Township Historical Society. So his uncle was a reeve of Bertie township. It has a great history.

Somebody says he has been watching for four hours and he is pleased. Paul Hope from Cambridge—well, there is hope. Paul Hope from Cambridge is totally opposed to what the Liberals are doing. Maybe Paul Hope was there—

Mr Farnan: What happened in Cambridge in September 1987?

Mr Kormos: The member for Cambridge is going to have to wait until it is his turn, and that is going to be a long time from now.

Paul Hope from Cambridge—I have a feeling that maybe this gentleman was there when the Premier of Ontario, back in September 1987, three days before the general election of that year, said that he had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums. That is why Paul Hope calls us at 965-1224 or 965-1239. That is why these phone calls are important.

It is going to get tougher and tougher; there are no two ways about it. It is three o'clock in the morning and people out there are getting tired of the Liberal arrogance. People out there are getting tired of the Liberals refusal to debate Bill 68. So it is going to be harder and harder for us to keep phone calls coming in. Do you know that, Mr Speaker? It is going to get harder and harder, no two ways about it. Things are going to slow down for a couple of hours. I am going to be able to go through the 100 or so phone calls that we have not been able to talk about yet.

You know the ones, Mr Speaker. Ones like Richard Rousseau from Windsor. Richard Rousseau is opposed to Bill 68. He says, "The member for Windsor-Sandwich will be forgotten after the next election." I do not think it has to be that way, because the member for Windsor-Sandwich will probably find himself a job somewhere around Windsor. He is not an old man. Richard Rousseau is perhaps being overly harsh to suggest that the member for Windsor-Sandwich should be merely forgotten. So to Richard Rousseau in Windsor we say thank you.

Jeanette Deacon calls and commends me for my zeal and honesty, and I thank Jeanette Deacon for her comments. She says, "The Liberals are penalizing older people and are going to drive up the cost of OHIP." You see, Mr Speaker, Jeanette Deacon has been following these discussions and understands how Bill 68, with its subsidization of the insurance industry

through OHIP, is going to drive up the cost of OHIP and take away much-needed money from that health care system. Jeff Spingsted—

Mrs Grier: We have a winner.

Mr Kormos: Thank you. A winner from Mississauga, Sharon Buntin, number 29. That is exactly how many Liberals have to vote against time allocation and against Bill 68 so that they can (1) keep their ridings in the next election, and (2) show the people of Ontario that they are not on the side of the big auto insurance industry but on the side of the people.

That is why it was the 29th call. Sharon Buntin from Lakeshore Road in Mississauga wins this autographed copy of *The Tabloid Zone* by my good friend William J. Thomas, a columnist, humorist, writer and, as I say, author of a soon-to-be-published book on a number of columns about Malcolm, his cat. The publisher is Jag Communications in Hamilton. The cover photo was done at Pupo's Super Market in Welland, which is just around the corner from where I am at Bald and Dennis. Pupo's is on the other end of Maple Avenue. It is up there by Maple and Riverside Drive. Pupo's is a great place and the Pupo family has been operating that family grocery store for years and years. Great business people, great grocers.

The phone number to call is 965-1224. I need your calls. If that line is busy, people can call 965-1239. Of course the area code is here in Toronto, area code 416.

The photo has, among others, Margaret Thomas in it, Bill Thomas's mother. His 83-year-old mother is in the jacket photo here. Margaret Thomas is the mother of more than a couple of Thomases: Bill, a brilliant and very talented writer, columnist and humorist, and his brother Dave, who is the local registrar of the Supreme Court in Welland.

0310

So this book will be sent out to Sharon Buntin of Lakeshore Road East in Mississauga with our best wishes. William Thomas has autographed it. We are going to get some autographs of the NDP caucus and, just like the *One Hundred Monkeys* book, any Liberal who wants to be re-elected and will vote against Bill 68 will also be permitted to autograph this book for Sharon Buntin.

Jeff Spingsted in Hamilton says he is behind us 100 per cent. "It is time the Liberals woke up and smelled the coffee." That is what Jeff Spingsted says.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, catch this one, and if the Attorney General would please calm down and clam up for 30 seconds—this one is important.

Dave from Barrie phones in. He is not in favour of Bill 68 but, for each hour that I talk, Dave will donate \$10 to a charity. He can pick whatever charity he wants.

It is 3:10; let's see how much money Dave contributes to charity, and it is time now to move adjournment of the debate.

0342

The House divided on Mr Kormos's motion, which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 7; nays 24.

Mr Kormos: It has been difficult for the people who are witnessing this to have to live with these 30-minute interruptions. The good music that the good staff play is—here are more phone messages—sometimes soporific. It remains that a

whole lot of people may well think that is not going on. Well, it is going on, let me tell you. It is carrying on.

We have been talking last night and this morning, because it is 3:45 now, since six o'clock last night—that is just shy of 10 hours—trying to persuade the Liberals here that they are barking up the wrong tree and that the people of this province expect far more from a government than they are getting from these Liberals. As is sometimes my style, I almost said “these clowns,” but I meant these Liberals here at Queen’s Park.

Ken Lawrence from Welland called in and said he wonders why the Liberals work so hard for the insurance companies. It is strange that Ken Lawrence would want to know why the Liberals work so hard for the insurance companies. He has a distinct impression that a whole lot of people do in this province.

As Ken Lawrence says, he is wondering why the Liberals are so beholden to the auto insurance industry here in Ontario. Why? Was it the mere \$100,000 and change that the Liberals got in the last general election by way of contributions? Is that what makes them so beholden? Is it something else? What does the insurance industry have on the Liberal Party of Ontario? Have they got photographs? Or just some of the letters? Why is this government and why is the Liberal Party so beholden to the insurance industry in Ontario?

People like Ken Lawrence from Welland called in to this number, 965-1224. I know it is late at night, early in the morning, but I also know that there are people out there watching and listening, just as there are people who come up here to sit in the gallery to see what is happening in their Parliament right here at Queen’s Park in Toronto. That is why people are calling in, 416-965-1224. That is why I want people to phone in and let us know what they think about what is going on.

They can be like the hundreds and hundreds of other people who have called in tonight witnessing what is happening right here at Queen’s Park. I know it is tough for people at this time of the morning to get to their phones and punch out that number, 965-1224 or, if that number is busy, 965-1239.

As you know, Mr Speaker, the number that people have been calling all evening and all morning is 965-1239 or 965-1224, right here at Queen’s Park. They can be a part of the process that is happening right here and right now.

People like Veral MacLean from Bowmanville knows Bill 68 is no good. He knows that we in the opposition are doing what we ought to be doing, fighting bad legislation.

0350

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Please do not interrupt the member speaking. Would you take your places, please.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker. A little bit of sober thought would be appropriate right now, because people who are listening would find this a sobering observation. It may be futile for me to speak of anything as a sobering situation for some of the members here tonight, but I tell you, people like Veral MacLean from Bowmanville is deadly serious about his concern about what the Liberal Party here in Ontario is doing to this Legislature. I hear those telephones ringing right now. The telephones are ringing back behind me right now.

Bob and Linda Goss and Tonya called up at 2:12 this morning. Bob works at General Motors. They live down in Dain City. You have heard me talk about these folks here in this Legislative Assembly not too long ago. Linda Goss is the director of the local Red Cross and she works just incredible hours

making great contributions to her community, and Tonya, who is just a delightful young lady, was Miss Winter Carnival in Niagara, Miss Niagara and, just a month ago, was crowned Miss Teen Canada right here in Toronto. She is a delightful, bright, capable young person who possesses a cornucopia of talents, who has a wisdom and maturity far beyond her really youthful years, who lives in Dain City.

Mr Philip: She does not even live in Welland.

Mr Kormos: Well, Dain City is the south part of Welland. It is a small community. As a matter of fact, Dain City is where Bill Thomas comes from.

An hon member: Did he not write a book?

Mr Kormos: He wrote a whole bunch of books. Bill Thomas is one of the greatest humour writers here in the—Mr Speaker, I showed you this, did I not, *The Tabloid Zone* by Bill Thomas—William J. if you do not know him? This book goes to Sharon Buntin. She won this book earlier this evening.

But to Bob and Linda Goss and Tonya, Miss Teen Canada—and we are very proud of her and so is her school. She is a student in grade 12 at Notre Dame Collegiate in Welland, an outstanding student, an outstanding athlete. She is involved in the peer tutoring program at her school. She is a youth volunteer with the Red Cross, and now she has added to all of that a very busy agenda doing appearances as Miss Teen Canada.

They call and they say, “Don’t give up.” I say God bless them, because they are great people to have stayed up until 2:12 in the morning. I tell you, it is a great inspiration to hear from hardworking, committed community people like them.

Norm McIntyre from Mississauga hopes there is not a Liberal sitting after the next election. I tell you, there are going to be Liberals after the next election—of course there are—but there are going to be a lot less Liberals here after the next election than there are here right now because, you see, the people of Ontario do not like seeing closure imposed by the Liberals here any more than they like seeing closure imposed by Brian Mulroney and the Conservatives up on Parliament Hill.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: Look what has happened once again. We are getting close to a nerve. They are starting to squirm; they are starting to squeal. They are starting to holler. They are starting to scream. Time for another shot of Novocain.

Mr Kube in London phones in and says, “More power to you.”

Greg Hemphill from St Catharines tells us we are doing a great job. He says, “Tell the Liberals to go away.” Go away. Go, farther, farther. Do you know what, Mr Speaker? With the Liberal attitude towards democracy and debate, this Legislative Assembly right now could do with a little bit of Liberal going away. We cannot make them go away. They have a majority here that is as arrogant and supercilious as any government has ever been, either in this province or any other province. People of Ontario know that. But the voters of Ontario can sure make them go away. Do you know what? Come next general election, the voters of Ontario will.

Tell you what I am going to do right now, Mr Speaker. Let the Liberals call an election right now. Let them call an election, end this debate, and we will put it to the electorate. Let’s do it. Get the House leader here. Get the Premier here. Get whatever they have here and call an election. The people of Ontario are quite ready to go to the polls on the issue of auto insurance, people like Dave Allen.

Dave Allen knows that auto insurance, as it is contemplated by Bill 68, is going to suck \$46 million in the first year alone out of OHIP. That is what Bill 68 is going to do. I appreciate hearing that from Dave Allen. He is right.

Donna has been an insurance broker for many years. Listen to this, Mr Speaker; there is support for Bill 68 in the province of Ontario—from the insurance industry. Donna, an insurance broker for many years, says Bill 68 is the best thing that ever happened to the business. From a personal point of view, it makes her want to get out of the business. That is an insurance broker here in Ontario.

Mrs Grier: I took the call.

Mr Kormos: The member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore took this call from Donna, who has been an insurance broker for many years. She is phoning in here at four in the morning. Donna says Bill 68 is the best thing that ever happened to the auto insurance business here in the province. You bet your boots—a billion-dollar payday for the auto insurance industry in the first year alone.

Mike Freeborn in Brantford—catch this—asks, “When did the Liberals turn into Ottawa Tories?” It is not “did they?” It is “when did they?” Remember that we have been telling you for a long time, Mr Speaker, that Liberals are Tories too. Remember the closure motions that Brian Mulroney has been bringing in Ottawa to force the goods and services tax on to an electorate that does not want it? Remember Brian Mulroney? He is still there, using closure to force GST through the federal House, and down here—

0400

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I appreciate the chance to talk to you. I appreciate telephone calls from people like Mike Freeborn in Brantford, who asks, “When did the Liberals turn into Ottawa Tories?” What this time allocation motion demonstrates is that Liberals are Tories too. Take Brian Mulroney, and he might as well be the Premier of Ontario. Take the Treasurer of Ontario, and he might as well be Mike Wilson. The problem is that Liberals are Tories too.

M. Vino from Cambridge calls and says, “The Liberals aren’t doing us any good.” That is an understatement. The fact is that with the time allocation motion, the Liberals are doing some real harm.

Carl Gillis from Ottawa calls this morning. Here it is four o’clock on a Friday morning, 27 April. The milk trucks are starting to do their deliveries. One of nicest things about where I came from in Welland is that Sunnyside Dairy used horse-drawn milk carts up until as recently as around 15 years ago. In view of what the Liberals are doing to our environment, perhaps Sunnyside Dairy would have been well advised to have kept on with the horse-drawn milk carts.

Carl Gillis from Ottawa is opposed to time allocation. He says: “This is attracting attention from all over the province of Ontario. Ask the Minister of Tourism how he is voting on this issue.” The Minister of Tourism’s voters are concerned about where he stands on Bill 68. That is why I would love to have an election on this. I would love to have the Premier walk in here.

Steve Lalanne from North York calls the Liberals machiavellian. Once again, this is a tough one for some of those guys, because you are talking about a historical reference and I think it has been a long time since the prince has ever been in

Classic Comics. But “machiavellian” is perhaps giving them a little too much credit. None the less, I am not afraid to tell you what Steve Lalanne of North York thinks about the Liberals. We are not afraid to talk to Steve Lalanne. That is why this closure motion is so dangerous, but it is a closure not just of the opposition but of the people of Ontario.

Robert Hood from Sarnia says, “If they spend so much time trying to fix the standing orders, why go to closure?” That is why they make a time allocation motion. They want to utilize their vast majority to force their way with a motion right through the standing orders. These guys are taking the standing orders and just chucking them. They are gone; forget it. As long as this government is prepared to abuse this majority in the manner that it is, forget the standing orders.

Mike Buntun from Mississauga had mentioned the book. Brian Pynchell from Thorold comes in; he was the second person to call mentioning William J. Thomas’s book *The Tabloid Zone*. He says, “Keep up the good work.”

James Johnston from Chalk River, the third person to call about *The Tabloid Zone*, William J. Thomas’s book, says, “Keep up the good work.”

Giz Lim from Toronto, the fourth person to call in mentioning William J. Thomas’s book *The Tabloid Zone*, calls to say that she supports us.

The message that David Krangle from Mississauga left is, “No-fault is bull—” and I am sure he must have meant “feathers” after that, “No-fault is bullfeathers,” because the person taking this message just put a stroke after “bull.” Maybe he figures David Krangle meant, “No-fault is bull.” Okay. He was a Liberal through and through, but David Krangle from Mississauga says, “No more, no way, never.”

It took Steve Nielson from Hamilton two hours to get through, but he says, “Congratulations.”

Lori Desjardin from Welland phones us this morning and she says, “It is so obvious to all viewing what is happening here last night and early this morning, that the Liberals are puppets and the insurance companies are pulling their strings.” She says, “Pete, cut the strings.”

George Mann from Niagara Falls says: “The Tories, the Conservatives in Ottawa are skewering everyone. The Liberals say they oppose the Conservatives yet they are doing the very same thing.” George Mann from Niagara Falls knows that the Liberals are doing some skewering of their own.

An hon member: How do you spell that word?

Mr Kormos: S-c-r-e-w-i-n-g.

Colette Lecompte from Thorold is watching this in the early morning hours and says, “Keep up the work.” You bet your boots.

Robert Hay from St Catharines says: “The Liberal refusal to withdraw shows refusal to listen to people. Never voting Liberal again.”

Barry Lansburg from here in Toronto says, “Thank you for standing up for us.”

Those are all people who called us at 965-1224 here at Queen’s Park. Or, if that line is busy, they have been calling on 965-1239. That, of course, is area code 416.

Remember 15 January? Ralph Nader was here at the general government committee. I started telling you a little while ago, Mr Speaker, that Nader very specifically acknowledged the relationship between what was happening specifically in Ontario with Bill 68 and what could be happening in the United States as a result of the Ontario phenomenon. Mr Nader said, “Certainly, I have seen enough state legislative hearings

citing Ontario and British Columbia and I hope that my remarks will be considered in that broader context." What Nader was saying is that what happens here in Canada is not in isolation. What happens here in Ontario with respect to Bill 68 is being observed very closely by other jurisdictions. He already indicates that he has been involved in a number of state legislative hearings wherein the Ontario and British Columbia experiences are being cited.

Do not forget that just a week earlier the Premier of Ontario had dumped all over Ralph Nader at that same general government committee. He did not have the courtesy to meet Nader when Nader was here, to address Nader head on.

Bill Cain from Rexdale calls in. He says: "Get the Premier out of bed. We all need some comic relief."

"Second," Nader said, "it does seem clear that any discussion of insurance and motor vehicle accidents inevitably extends to an inclusion of issues of justice and fairness for injured people." What he is doing, when one listens to his comments, is explaining what his perspective is, where he is coming from. He says that a discussion of insurance and motor vehicle accidents inevitably leads to a concern, to addressing attention to what is fair and just for injured people, which means the legal framework or the legal system of rights and remedies.

"It also involves overall broad auto accident prevention policy of the same jurisdiction," another important point, something about which Nader is undoubtedly a leading expert. It inevitably and similarly involves discussion of auto accident prevention. He says, "You really cannot separate any of these three from one another."

Nader goes on to say something about the United States which is oh so well known here in Canada, because this very same phenomenon happened right here in this country. Nader says, "Since the contrived insurance liability crisis started in 1985 in the United States"—

Mr Allen: Contrived, that is the key word.

Mr Kormos: Precisely. You remember, Mr Speaker, the Brampton motorcyclist case. That was the one that put city councils and boards of education and—

Mr Charlton: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Could you see if there is a quorum present in the House?

The Speaker: I will certainly ascertain if there is a quorum.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals: A quorum is not present, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

0414

The Speaker: A quorum is present. The member for Welland-Thorold may continue.

Mr Kormos: Quorum, as we all know, is when Liberals are over in their caucus room instead of here in the Legislative Assembly.

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: It is not our job to keep a quorum.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Do you ever watch Saturday Night Live when they do a little skit called The Whiners? Well, here we are. This is The Whiners. I wish people

could sit and watch. You listen to it, but sometimes the tone of voice sets you right on edge. It is like the sound of fingernails scraping against an old slate blackboard. I wish they would stop whining.

Keith Craig from Kitchener says: "Just got off work. Furious at the auto insurance bill." Not an NDP supporter, but supporting us. "Disgusted with Liberal catcalling.

Keith Craig from Kitchener says they are not listening. That is the whole problem, because the Liberals do not listen to people like Keith Craig and they do not want to listen to people who want to speak on behalf of Keith Craig. They want to listen to the auto insurance industry, they want to listen to the big developers, but they do not want to listen to the Keith Craigs of the world from Kitchener.

We are not afraid to listen to the Keith Craigs from Kitchener. We just wish that we could find 29 Liberals who would vote against this time allocation motion. One is coming over. I do not know whether she is going to indicate her opposition to the time allocation motion or not. I have had private conversations with more than a few Liberals who are deathly afraid of what Bill 68 is going to do to their political careers.

Mike Hunt gave us a call. He says, "Keep up the good work."

Dave Fleming calls and says, "Elected members lose when they get complacent."

Ingrid Barty says the Minister of Labour will not get her vote.

We have Nader operating from three basic premises and he says you cannot consider each one of them in isolation. Then we have Nader talking about the contrived insurance liability crisis in 1985 in the United States. We are all familiar with that same phenomenon right here in Ontario. That was the Brampton motorcycle case, the \$6-million judgement, one about which—some of these guys better check their history—there was not a single penny paid out by the insurance company during the whole course of that litigation. Once the appellate courts finally dealt with the judgement, there was not a penny paid out.

In the interim insurance liability costs went sky high all over the province and of course every single insurer is telling every single insured that the reason for those sky-high prices is judgements like the one that happened in Brampton. Yet when the appellate courts overturned that, so that the insurance industry did not have to pay out a penny, did the insurance industry similarly roll back the prices that it had charged? No. That was the contrived insurance liability crisis, the same as what Ralph Nader was talking about in 1985 in the United States of America.

Nader indicated that at the point of the contrived liability insurance crisis in the United States he had been very concerned about policymakers taking too narrow a focus on the more immediate perceived urgency of insurance rates without getting down to the fundamental cause of claims in the first place. Do members hear what Nader is saying? He is saying that what you do is you get down to discuss the fundamental cause of claims in the very first place and the rights of injured people to protect themselves as a consequence of their injuries, as well as the administrative process in the courts and regulatory agencies.

0420

I was there when Nader said that to the general government committee, and I saw the blank look on more than a few Liberal faces. They simply did not understand what Nader was saying.

So Nader tried to simplify it. He tried to put it in language that even the Liberals on that committee could understand. He said:

"Look; for example, if this committee were considering the damage done by leaking of water in homes in Ontario, and the focus was entirely on how do we pay for the damage, how do we pay for the subsidence, how do we pay for other expenses, obviously we would all be asking, 'Well, why don't we focus on the cause of the leak?'"

Well, why do we not deal with prevention as a top priority? That is the question. That is the question John Bates of People to Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere would ask this government on, I am sure, a daily basis if he had the chance. But no, the Minister of Financial Institutions dumps all over John Bates of PRIDE.

Hugh O'Brien from Sault Ste Marie, his family admitted Liberal for three generations, ready to swing to the NDP.

Jane Seymour from Oakville does not like what the Liberals are doing, says they are wasting money.

Ross and Doreen Henshaw from Hamilton—he says two Liberal MPPs that he knows are going to have a hard time getting re-elected if they vote for Bill 68.

Mrs C. White from Port Colborne hopes that we stay on top of this all night, and by goodness, we darn near have because it is 4:20 in the morning right now.

Michael Thibeault from Kitchener says, "Keep it up."

Bill Loveman from St Catharines says, "Send pacifiers, not colouring books."

Stan from Hamilton says, "Keep going."

Vern MacDonald from Kitchener says, "Victims won't get their full due under Bill 68."

Mr Baker from Toronto is another fellow who compares how the Liberals have fouled up the workers' compensation system in this province to what they are prepared to do to auto insurance. He, like many other people, said, "The Liberals have already made a mess of workers' comp; why don't they straighten up one mess before they start making another?"

Supporters from Thornhill call and say, "You're doing a wonderful job." I appreciate that from Thornhill.

Carl St Gelais from Hamilton is all for getting rid of Bill 68, he is all for a full debate. He is a disabled person who simply cannot afford to have Bill 68 impact on his life.

Betty Anne Vigh did write in a week, two weeks ago. Betty Anne Vigh phoned in. She says she is behind us 100 per cent. She says, "Keep it up."

By gosh, when I get messages like that, it makes me want to go till five o'clock in the afternoon of Saturday.

Meredith Orr of Coldwater says: "Doing a good job. When Liberals interrupt, shows how much respect they have for the public: none."

Mrs Bonnar—the family name, I believe, is Bonnar—says that four years ago her husband was in an accident. This bill would make it impossible for her to get a car to visit her injured husband, because she knows, as the Minister of Financial Institutions told her and everybody else in the province, that when Bill 68 passes, drivers are going to face premium increases of up to 50 per cent, and almost a third of a million drivers right here in the province of Ontario are going to face premium increases of up to 80 per cent. Nancy Wood's article in the Toronto Star confirms that and explains why.

You heard that Nader tried to simplify his arguments so that, as I say, even the Liberal members could understand him. He has a really broad understanding of the role of insurance, I suppose not just purely as an economic function but as a social function. He says he has always seen the insurance function as

being more than just a compensation function. Listen to this, and this is what is so very important to the argument. Again, I am confident that if some Liberals could understand it, we would be a lot closer to finding those 29 Liberals who are going to vote against Bill 68, or who are going to vote against this time allocation motion, for sure.

He writes that the insurance function "is very much a function to be used"—that could well be—"for determining risks first, ranking risks second, and, thirdly, generating disincentives for reckless behaviour." Remember these three qualities: determining risks, ranking risks and then generating disincentives for reckless behaviour. "Now, that starts with the design of the automobile," Nader stated, "the design of the highway and the behaviour of drivers, as well as the traffic mix." Again, that is not difficult-to-understand sort of stuff. You know what Nader is talking about, Mr Speaker, and these people should too.

So you see, we have got to talk about design of the car, design of the highway, behaviour of drivers and the traffic mix. He says that "If you are going to avoid the accusation of being a mere Band-Aid, you must start with a policy focusing on prevention." That is how you have to start. That is not a little bit of wrapping, not a little bit of ribbon and bow you attach to it later. You start with a policy of prevention. You use that as your starting point.

What he says is, "That does not just consist of a government policy in terms of regulating the auto industry, but it is also very much an insurance industry policy that should be paired with its underwriting and compensation benefits." I tell you right there, what does that give rise to? It gives rise to a realization that that is yet another way that public driver-owned systems can work so much more effectively.

Even Nader, back on 15 January 1990, understood that the western systems in Canada—in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia—were real alternatives to the auto insurance industry as we know it in Ontario, safer alternatives, more affordable alternatives, more efficient alternatives.

0430

Let's run this past you for a moment, Mr Speaker: The Liberal Party in Quebec in 1970 campaigned on the issue of public auto insurance. The Parti Québécois won the election and instituted the public insurance program that the Liberals campaigned with. The Liberal Party in Quebec campaigned in 1970 on a policy of public auto insurance, and the Liberals run a public auto insurance system in Quebec right now.

No, wait a minute. That is Premier Bourassa. Do not forget he is the Premier of Ontario's good friend. He is the one who comes here to Toronto to lunch with him, to wine him and dine him, or to persuade him to run for the federal leadership. Obviously, the Premier of Ontario has something that Premier Bourassa finds very attractive.

It is Bourassa who has been touting the Premier of Ontario. There is simply no doubt about it. Bourassa has been touting the Premier of Ontario as the sort of guy whom he would want to see as federal leader of the Liberal Party.

Now, you have to question. We know where Bourassa is coming from. You have to question what it is that the Premier of Ontario has that makes Bourassa so eager to place him at the helm of the federal party. Interesting perspective. It is that same Premier Bourassa, a Liberal, who runs a public auto insurance system in Quebec.

Steve Kozak from Oakville was brought up a Liberal. He and his friends will not vote for them again. He has two children, and if he loses the right to sue, the right to use the

courts to obtain relief in the instance of him or one of his children being an innocent injured victim, he knows that that would be disastrous.

So you see, the Liberals run a public auto insurance system in Quebec, and, my goodness, the Tories run one in Manitoba—

An hon member: Who runs the one in British Columbia now?

Mr Kormos: Vander Zalm and the Social Credit Party; the second most right-wing government in Canada. The second most right-wing government in Canada runs a public auto insurance system. I used to believe that Vander Zalm and the Socreds were the most right-wing government in Canada. That is before I had a chance to witness Queen's Park and the Liberals at first hand. I know now that Vander Zalm is but second to the Liberals of Queen's Park.

So there you go, Mr Speaker. The Liberals run public insurance in Quebec, the Tories run it in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the Socreds run it in British Columbia, and you know what? Not one of those jurisdictions would dare dismantle those public, driver-owned, non-profit auto insurance systems. They would not dare dismantle them, because those systems provide insurance more affordably, more fairly, and deal specifically with what Nader tried to talk to the general government committee about.

People are using those phones. Mr Crangal from Mississauga—Mr Crangal is still a Liberal. The message that he asks us—because, you see, it would seem that the Liberals will not listen to him, so we will convey the message—is: (1) Mr Crangal is still a Liberal; (2) He wants the government to know that as a Liberal he does not support Bill 68. I trust that the purpose of his message was to ask this government to not support it.

Mr Jenkins from Kitchener—now wait a minute. Who is the young man here? Mr Jenkins from Kitchener made reference to me as “a young man doing a good job.” The “good job” is appreciated, but the “young man” is—I am just overwhelmed. Mr Jenkins from Kitchener has been watching since 2:30 and he says, “No-fault is all fault.”

Martin Aak from Toronto was in the gallery here earlier. He calls in. Mr Aak feels that democracy is under attack in Ontario. He says, “Many people died to defend it. Let's remember that.”

Susan Yakovlev from Windsor cannot understand why the Liberals want this no-fault system; it is not fair to the working person.

Willard Knight calls from Port Hope. Willard Knight said, “It seems like the Liberals in Ontario are some kind of right-wingers.” Willard Knight from Port Hope is learning that Liberals are Tories too.

Tony DaSilva from Brampton says that he has been trying to get through for the past three hours. He says, “Why are the Liberals being such jerks?” He is watching this. He spent three hours trying to get through on those phone lines, 965-1224 and 965-1239. He has had a chance to watch what is going on in here for the last three hours and he says, “Why are the Liberals being such jerks?” I do not know why. Mr DaSilva from Brampton recognizes that the opposition is speaking out for everybody. We are not speaking for the insurance companies, no two ways about it. We are not beholden to the insurance companies; they have spokespeople over there in the Liberal party. We will speak out for the seniors, the workers, the young people, the students and the farmers.

Deb and Don Ellis from Hamilton say something that is not overly subtle. They say, “The people who put the Liberals in

can also put them out.” Do not forget, drivers can vote; insurance companies cannot.

John Madden says it is nice to see someone sticking up for ordinary people in Ontario.

Dave Thomson: “Bill 68 and provincial sales tax will end this government.” Dave Thomson from Barrie has something there.

Paul Coffey from Halton Hills, Georgetown, says the Liberals can run but they cannot hide.

Mike Capitosto is from Willowdale. He says this is amazing. I do not know—I think he means this is just amazing.

Barb and Danny Daneliuk are from the riding of the member for Hamilton Centre. She is not getting in again. There are going to be New Democrats running against the Liberal candidate in Hamilton Centre.

Mark Little from St Catharines says people should not be muzzled in a democracy.

So look: We have to avoid pure Band-Aidism. That is what Ralph Nader tried to tell the general government committee. The starting point has to be a policy that focuses on prevention.

Nader pointed out that here in Ontario a major portion—he conceded not the greater portion, but a major portion—of the auto insurance dollar is paid out for property damage, for repair and replacement of vehicles. So Nader says that anybody “who is concerned about the cost of insurance has to be concerned about the cost of claims, has to be concerned about the design of the motor vehicle, with flimsy bumpers, with repair-prone engineering modules in the car and with the auto repair fraud which goes on.”

Somebody might mention that the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations has a ghost car. I presume that is something that Dan Aykroyd drives around in, because Lord knows we have not seen his body-shop ghost car—

An hon member: If they are ghosts you cannot see them.

Mr Kormos: Yes, it is an invisible car, all right. It is an invisible program. We are not even talking Casper here; we are talking non-existent, we are talking zilch. You cannot see it, you cannot feel it, you cannot touch it, you cannot hear it. It is all part of the fluff; it is all part of the smoke and mirrors. A ghost car. We have not heard of a single instance of the utilization of this ghost car; we have not heard of a single investigation, a single arrest, a single charge.

To boot, do not forget, Mr Speaker, we know how you can use an undercover car, or ghost car if you will, in the instance—we have talked about this before—of motor vehicle repair. You know how they do it. They take a spark plug wire or one spark plug and they short it out. They take it in to a repair shop and they see whether the mechanic replaces your whole engine or just replaces the spark plug wire, or somewhere in between. How do you fake a broken windshield? How do you fake a crumpled rear quarter panel? How do you fake—

Mr Charlton: On a point of order, Mr Speaker. See if there is a quorum present.

The Speaker: There has been a request that we ascertain if a quorum is present.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

0444

Mr Kormos: Mr Garshowitz calls from Toronto. He works with an insurance company. He says Bill 68 will not benefit any drivers, just the insurance companies. He works for an insurance company; he knows what he is talking about.

Tom Noble from Windsor has just called in on either 965-1224—I know it is a quarter to five in the morning—or on 965-1239. Tom Noble says—the same message we have heard from a few other people—“The Liberals have messed up worker’s comp. Now they want to mess up auto insurance.”

Rod Armstrong from Windsor says: “Debate is the cornerstone of democracy. Are the Liberals asleep or are they afraid of something, because why won’t they debate Bill 68?”

Nader did his very best to explain to the standing committee on general government what the focus of its attention really ought to be, if one was really interested in resolving auto insurance difficulties here in the province of Ontario, and quite frankly anywhere else.

He says, in the areas that he spoke of, that he did “not see much attention given to these areas with any specificity.” He told the committee, “For example, a 10-mile-an-hour bumper would probably do more than any other single factor other than airbags to cut down on the claims in the auto insurance area, certainly for property damage.”

Other than air bags, a 10-mile-an-hour bumper would do more than any single factor to reduce property claims. (1) It is a rather modest proposal. (2) It is not a difficult one for even the dullest of minds to comprehend. (3) It is virtually self-evident. Did the minister’s parliamentary assistant, the member for Guelph, do a single thing on behalf of the Ministry of Financial Institutions to initiate with the feds a requirement for a 10-mile-an-hour bumper here in Canada? No, not a thing. That is pretty shabby, pretty pathetic, pretty dismal.

Nader says, “So we must ask ourselves, what is the legislation proposed before this Legislature going to, first, signal to Ottawa to move more quickly in establishing crashworthy standards for cars?” We know the air-bag technology is there. Indeed, Canada—Ontario—is one of the major manufacturers of air bags and one of the developers of air-bag technology. You would think this government, if it gave anything more than a tinker’s damn about industry here in the province of Ontario, would be doing a whole lot more to enforce and require installation of air bags in any new car being imported into the province of Ontario. You would think that.

“Air bags are ready to go, but they ought to be accelerated in terms of standard equipment. In the United States, three million air bags will be produced this year on the driver side of new motor vehicles.” Look at what is happening: three million air bags in the United States, for the driver’s side only. “Twelve insurance companies are giving...discounts for air-bag-equipped cars, ranging from \$30 to \$60, and that will go up as more cars have air bags installed as standard equipment.

“So the signal from the province,” Nader states, “since I understand you cannot set auto safety standards at the provincial level, should be to the national government to accelerate its crash prevention and injury prevention standards. The same holds true for bumper standards. At the provincial level certainly the stronger regulation of fraudulent, duplicative, unnecessary repair practices is in order.”

0450

So you see, Mr Speaker, Nader is addressing a singularly logical matter, one that cries out for action on the part of these Liberals and one that was thoroughly ignored by the Minister of Financial Institutions, by his parliamentary assistant and by anybody else who was involved on the government side throughout the course of these standing committee on general government hearings.

I could probably end right there, but I know that people are phoning. The member for York South is back there answering phone calls. People are calling 416-965-1224, or for other people who want to call in on the other line it is 965-1239. The member for York South, the leader of the New Democratic Party, is out there answering those calls and is going to bring those messages in to me. I appreciate that those calls are going to slow down. Heck, it is 10 to five in the morning. Mr Speaker, when are they going to rerun this one?

Look at what Nader had to say. Listen here: “As I have said on a prior occasion”—this is oft-quoted—“we in the United States have traditionally looked to Canada for emulation in social insurance and social welfare advances.” Nader therefore is “particularly alarmed at any process in this country which begins to slide backwards.”

Do you hear what he is saying? Nader is alarmed because Nader, as a consumer advocate, recognizes that the United States and the American jurisdictions so often look to Canada for leadership on social welfare and social issues. Nader then sees it as a matter of great alarm and concern when he sees, in an American context, a backsliding.

He points out, “There tends to be a contagion to this type of slide, particularly when you read the statements, private and public, of the insurance companies and the reinsurance companies, most prominently Lloyd’s of London”—it seems to me there is somebody very prominent in the Liberal cabinet who owns a little bit of stock in Lloyd’s of London, but so be it, that is okay. Whether it is a blind trust or not, who knows? The old blind trust, right?—“which are quite candid about reducing the protections under the civil justice system down to common denominators existing in Britain and perhaps eventually in Korea.”

Nader is not unfamiliar with the types of pressure tactics that are used by the insurance industry or the reinsurance industry, like Lloyd’s of London, because he points out that a number of years ago in Alaska, 21 recommendations were presented by Lloyd’s of London which “spelled procedural and substantive weakening of the civil justice system in terms of injured people achieving adequate compensation.”

What Nader is saying is that the insurance industry has not been ambiguous about this. Their position has always been quite clear: Diminish the rights of people to utilize the court system. Do members understand why Nader felt obliged to say that? He said that this is a trait, not one that is necessarily criticizable, but it is clear. The insurance industry is not ambiguous about this. The insurance industry has consistently sought to reduce people’s rights to use courts.

He says, “The question really that needs to be pondered is, is it so necessary, given other corrective alternatives, to reduce the rights of the most vulnerable people in your province, people who are injured as a result of motor vehicle accidents or crashes?” He is talking about the most vulnerable people. He is asking, is it necessary to reduce their rights?

Mr B. Rae: Here are more calls. They are coming in all the time—965-1224, the same number.

Mr Kormos: It is 965-1224.

Don Angus calls in from Hastings, Ontario. Don Angus says, “You can always tell a Liberal, but you can’t tell him much.”

Here is one at 4:46 from Jim McCann. We have heard this comment before, “Liberals are as irresponsible as the federal Tories.” He is going to vote NDP in September.

Marlene Ellis from Scarborough says, "The Liberal Party is perpetrating a fraud, another piece of junk they are trying to ram down our throats." Marlene Ellis from Scarborough says that about Bill 68 and about this time allocation motion.

John Daly from Toronto says that he has been trying to call all night. We apologize. There are only two lines: 965-1239 and 965-1224. Those are the lines. We have only two of them. John Daly from Toronto says that he has been trying to call. He wanted to call with a vote of support and he says that he is proud of the opposition for hanging in.

Frank Hanrahan from Mississauga says: "Great job, Pete. David and Goliath come to mind."

Paul Coffey called in for the second time. It is about how somebody needs to dry out—amen. I do not know. I think Paul Coffey noticed that somebody had a wet sleeve on his jacket or something. I could not imagine why he would suggest that anybody else would have to dry out around here.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: No, it was in reference to a Liberal member. I cannot for the life of me—

Interjection.

0500

Mr Kormos: Maybe the one who was standing beside me trying to interrupt. I cannot for the life of me figure that one out—"dry out."

Nader again:

"The question that really needs to be pondered is, is it so necessary, given other...alternatives, to reduce the rights of the most vulnerable people in your province, people who are injured as a result of motor vehicle accidents or crashes? Is it so important to reduce their rights as the way to entertain the hope that the insurance rates increase will be moderated? This is what is so troubling. There is a clear intent on the part of the bill to take away certain benefits." He is talking about Bill 68. He talks about a clear intent. "I do not think anybody would deny that—most prominently pain and suffering, enjoyment of life and benefits for a significantly injured person."

Catch this, Mr Speaker, because Nader hits the nail right on the head. He says, "There is a clear intent on the part of the bill to take away certain benefits...pain and suffering, enjoyment of life and benefits for a significantly injured person. There is no similar guarantee of reduced rates."

Nader was saying this back on 15 January 1990. Since then the Minister of Financial Institutions has announced that there are going to be premium increases of up to 50 per cent and we have learned that for almost a third of a million drivers here in Ontario premium increases are going to be as high as 80 per cent.

He says, "There is a certainty of taking away certain rights on the one hand, but not a certainty of reducing rates on the other, even if that was considered a civilized exchange," which he does not believe it is.

He talks about the rights of injured people. These are things "which not only compensate them as human beings rather than as mere damaged chattels but also generate a modest amount of deterrence, disclosure and ethical growth of the law in making perpetrators of harm more accountable for their misdeeds."

He talks about a \$200 lawsuit down in Atlanta against Aetna, "which has under discovery generated the disclosure of internal Aetna documents advising its claims adjusters how to avoid paying legitimate claims, just out of a simple \$200 claim—the disclosure has been in the Georgia newspapers and

the Georgia media—as an indication of the extra, individual contribution of lawsuits to broader awareness, broader reform and corrective action.

Nader says this: "I have always objected to no-fault on a number of grounds; that is, it undermines several of the functions of the tort system, one...being deterrence, a kind of ethical judgement on bad actors, negligent, reckless drivers in this case, but it could be reckless and negligent automobile manufacturers as well, which intertwine with the sequence that leads to the accident. It also generates more disclosure and it generates an ethical growth."

Ethical growth is something about which the Liberals in this province do not know a whole lot. Ethical growth is something that is foreign to the Liberal Party in Ontario. Ethical growth was stunted when Patti Starr sat on the Liberal Party of Ontario. That set ethical growth back a good decade or two for the Liberals of Ontario. That Frigidaire and the Sherwin-Williams coating did not help much either.

An hon member: It took us back to the days of Mitch Hepburn.

Mr Kormos: It took us back to the years of Mitch Hepburn. I suppose that is the only place you can go back to. We do not have much of a history, and the sad thing is that the modest history of Liberal government in Ontario is marked, is it not? Patti Starr, Frigidaires and Sherwin-Williams, big donations at election time from the insurance industry, and then of course the insurance industry wants the payback, does it not? The insurance industry wants the payback. I mean, it is an old—one hand washes the other.

"Some of our greatest reservoirs of ethical development under the law have come from appellate decisions arising out of personal injury cases: Cardozo, Oliver Wendell Holmes. These are really marvellous expansions of obligations of people to one another to take due care, to engage in proper warning, proper notice, the whole framework of accountability.

"Workers' compensation is an ethical dead end." If we have not learned that here in the province of Ontario, then we simply have not been paying attention. It is an ethical dead end, and in the United States, he writes: "It is a deterrent dead end. It is a disclosure dead end"—boy, we have had that experience here in Canada, have we not? In the province of Ontario it is a disclosure dead end—"and as a compensating function, it is frozen in time. That is the no-fault system. The question is, do we want that type of structure to be imposed on an auto injury arena, which desperately needs a dynamism to the legal processes that affect it? Do we really want to treat human beings as chattels?" That is what the Liberal Party is doing by virtue of Bill 68. "Do we really want to treat human beings as chattels? We should remember that if your car is damaged, making your car whole is repairing your car."

Catherine MacInnes from Guelph phones in. It was 4:56, four minutes to five, that Ms MacInnes called in. She says we are doing an incredible job, following it for three weeks, very moved with what we have done in our fight for democracy, opening Parliament to the people—opening Parliament to the people—people have power and a say, trying to make a system just and fair. "We need full debate. We need to scrap 68. We have to start looking to Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia."

Fern Burnett—these are all people, Mr Speaker, who are calling in on 965-1224, these are people phoning us at 965-1224, right here at Queen's Park, area code 416, and the ones who cannot get through on 965-1224 are calling us at 965-1239,

both area code 416, right here at Queen's Park in Toronto—965-1224.

Mr Charlton: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: In view of the fact the member for Welland-Thorold has not slept for four years now and may go on for some time, perhaps you could check for a quorum.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

0511

The Acting Speaker: I have been advised that a quorum is present, so with a great deal of privilege, I would like to recognize the honourable member for Welland-Thorold, who is participating, for those of you who have just joined us, in orders of the day, item 51, resuming the adjourned debate on government notice of motion 30 on time allocation in relation to Bill 68, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance.

Mr Kormos: People have been phoning in at 965-1224 or 965-1239. People are on their way to work from various parts of Toronto right now. I want them to know they can drop into Queen's Park on the way to work. There are not a whole lot of members here. Lord knows, there are precious few Liberals. Lots of parking on the north side. Come on in and drop in and just say hello.

Phillip Jones from St Catharines calls in and he says that, "When governments conspire with corporations against the public interest, this is directly contrary to democracy." Phillip Jones is dead on. "When governments conspire with corporations against the public interest, this is directly contrary to democracy."

Vince Azarello from Mississauga is talking about a political party being on the take. He ain't talking about the New Democrats. He says, "It's as if they were on the take." Well, I have got a feeling that Vince Azarello's view of the Liberal Party is shared by a whole lot of people out there across Ontario.

Fern Burnett—I started mentioning Fern Burnett—phones in with the message, "You deserve a medal." I do not know whether she is talking about you, Mr Speaker, for your excellent, excellent conduct of this assembly since—why, gosh, for almost 12 hours now. I agree with Fern Burnett. You, Mr Speaker, deserve a medal. You have put up with a lot of nonsense from a lot of numbskulls over the last 12 hours. You had to have some people gently guided out of the assembly before they slipped and fell and hurt themselves, right, Mr Speaker? You had to guide them out of here gently, and I know it is late at night and early in the morning, but you have done an incredible job, Mr Speaker. You deserve a medal.

Irene, from Windsor—I cannot say good night, Irene. Good morning, Irene. Irene calling from Windsor; good morning, Irene. Huddie Ledbetter would not mind, but Irene—

Mr B. Rae: They just can't stop coming.

Mr Kormos: My leader has got more right here. He is there answering the phone at 965-1224, and Irene, phoning in from Windsor, says, "Bill 68 and closure is just another problem they have to add to property tax increases in Windsor."

An hon member: Can we have the phone number?

Mr Kormos: Yes, the phone number is 965-1224. You know, a Liberal member asked for the phone number—965-1224. These Liberals have been sitting here for the last 12 hours. You would think they would know the phone numbers to call in by now.

Irene says Bill 68 and closure is just another problem they have to add to property tax increases in Windsor.

Why are property taxes rising in Windsor? Well, for the very same reason that they are rising in Welland and Thorold: Because this Liberal government has been cutting back like mad on its grants to municipalities, because this government has been imposing financial burdens on municipalities that municipalities simply cannot afford. And you know what? This government, the Liberals here, squeal like stuck pigs when the feds in Ottawa cut back on the transfer payments down to Queen's Park. Well, what do you think they have been doing to municipalities across Ontario for the last four or five years, huh?

Gord Robinson, calling from Halton Hills, says the insurance companies are sticking it to his son for \$4,000 a year in auto insurance premiums, yet his son, indeed, will be serving the public as a paramedic.

Rob West just called in from St Catharines. Rob West is the president of the St Catharines and District Labour Council.

An hon member: A Liberal.

Mr Kormos: Oh no, he is a good New Democrat, I tell you, and a fine representative of those 15,000 workers—a fine New Democrat and great representative of those 15,000 workers—and I do not think Rob has every voted Liberal in his life. I do not think he has every voted Tory in his life. I will bet you dollars to doughnuts that Rob has voted New Democrat each and every time he has had a chance to vote. He is a fine candidate, a fine representative of 15,000 workers down there.

I tell you, Mr Speaker, that David Wolfe from Brampton calls and says we are doing a wonderful job. He voted Liberal in the last election, so he probably voted for this member—

Mr McClelland: Give me that one. I want to call him. Come on, give me it.

Mr Kormos: This is a member from Brampton. I tell you, Mr Speaker, the member from Brampton is a member of the Liberal caucus who is thinking about opposing Bill 68, but I want this member to more than think about it. If this member will commit himself to opposing Bill 68, he is guaranteed re-election in the riding of Brampton South. God bless him; stick with it. I tell him, oppose Bill 68 and he is guaranteed re-election, I tell the member for Brampton South that right now. The member for Brampton South opposing Bill 68: God bless his constituents. His constituents are going to think better of him for it, I tell him that right now, and I want more to come on over, come right over here.

An hon member: And he came here in a wheelchair and he walks away—

Mr Kormos: He walks away with an election victory. I tell you that; he walks away with an election victory.

Now, I tell you that if the member for Brampton South is going to be number one, I would move adjournment of the House. Mr Speaker—

The Acting Speaker: Sorry. The honourable member for Welland-Thorold has moved adjournment of the House.

0550

The House divided on Mr Kormos's motion, which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 7; nays 22.

The Acting Speaker: It has been brought to my attention that the ayes are 7 and the nays 22. That being the case, I have no alternative but to carry on, forge ahead and recognize the member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos: Good morning, Mr Speaker. I tell you, I am as happy to be here this morning as I was at midnight and as I was some 12 hours ago at six o'clock yesterday afternoon when we started this exercise.

People have been calling from all over this province. They have been calling 965-1224; they have been calling 965-1239. On those two lines, in the course of the last 12 hours, we have received almost 400 phone calls condemning the Liberals, condemning their closure motion, condemning the Tories in Ottawa and, Lord knows, Liberals are Tories too.

People like Juan Barnsley from Hamilton calls and says, "Give 'em Hades." Jamel Singh from Thornhill says that the Minister of Financial Institutions should listen to the people and not the insurance companies. Harry Persaud from Richmond Hill says that we should say no to Bill 68. He says a whole lot more attention ought to be paid to the level of insurance company support of the Liberals, their party and their candidates at election time.

Robert Taylor of Toronto says, "The Liberals should be renamed the unspeakable party." Michael Smith in Toronto says, "Bill 68 provides nothing for pain and suffering." It provides nothing for 95 per cent of all innocent injured accident victims; 95 per cent of all innocent injured accident victims will receive not a penny in compensation for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life.

Maureen Cunningham from Scarborough calls and says, "Got to hand it to you for saying no to no-fault." There are simply no two ways about it. Of these almost 400 phone calls—at least, that is what my count has been and it might be under a little bit—there have been New Democrats but, more significantly, there have been Tories and Liberals, huge numbers of Liberals.

A common theme running throughout all these calls is: "We used to be Liberal, but no more. We are not Liberal any more because of what the Liberals are doing to democracy here in the province of Ontario and because of what the Liberals are doing to the drivers, taxpayers and the innocent injured victims with Bill 68."

Alec from the east end of Toronto called 965-1224 and said, "Congratulations to the opposition," on what he saw as a job well done. Paul Wiseman from Markham gives us support. "The only persons who get no-fault are the insurance companies." The only party for whom no-fault insurance is really no-fault is in fact the auto insurance industry. Now, Paul Wiseman says that the Liberals are in bed with the insurance companies.

Interjection.

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I believe the member for Durham-York is flouting the rules of this place. It is well known that no one is supposed to read a speech into this House. As far as I am concerned, that goes for reading interjections. The member is using a book there to teach himself various kinds of interjections to hurl at the member speaking and that seems to me to be grossly unfair. He should do it in the ad lib fashion that we expect from all members.

Mr Ballinger: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: For the information of the honourable member for Scarborough West,

in fact I am preparing a speech that I am giving tomorrow evening.

Mr R. F. Johnston: —in the sense that the title of his book is *Retorts and Quips*. You cannot make a speech—

Mr Ballinger: It's a roast.

Mr R. F. Johnston: —basically injecting your own barbs at yourself. It just does not make sense.

The Acting Speaker: Both of you are totally out of order.

Mr Ballinger: This weekend the hospital foundation in my riding of Durham York is holding a roast for a very good citizen of the community. I am one of the roasters and I am using this pun book to prepare my retort.

0600

Mr Kormos: I do not understand how the member for Durham-York can claim he is writing a speech. I offered him crayons about two or three hours ago and he never took them. It seems bizarre to me that he can suggest he is indeed preparing a speech.

I want to get back to those good people who have been calling. We have had people sitting here all night watching this whole proceeding. Angelo Bucciarelli was up here watching for the biggest chunk of the night. Angelo Bucciarelli works with National Group Realty Services in Downsview. Angelo Bucciarelli was interested enough and concerned enough about what is happening right here in the province of Ontario and Angelo Bucciarelli from National Group Realty Services spent a big chunk of time right here at Queen's Park watching what is happening.

Mary Pendlebury from Windsor calls and says she has been watching for hours. She says to hang in there. She says, "What makes the Liberals think that they can pull this thing off?"

Mr Moscatini is a former officer with the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force. He has seen a whole lot of kids hurt. He says that Bill 68 requires more debate because it is not adequate to protect kids, little people, youngsters, children.

Tony DaSilva from Brampton called. He said: "Where are the other MPPs, the Liberals? They are not earning their pay. Why aren't all the Liberals here? They are getting paid. They should be here."

Bruce Gilks from Guelph commends us on our efforts. He says the public is getting shafted. Mr Gilks says, "The Liberals are playing into the insurance companies' hands."

Interjection.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Mr Speaker, on a point of order.

The Acting Speaker: I cannot imagine what the point of order is, but I have been listening to the others.

Mr R. F. Johnston: An unseemly interjection under section 20(b) has been made, as you will know, Mr Speaker. You can refer to your book if you look to it. The member for Brampton South has asked for a number, which I am about to give him if he will sit down and somebody will write it out for him. Please take a seat. I am reading the member the number. The number for Tony DaSilva from Brampton is 459-6134. Please call him back and have a chat with him. I am sure he would be happy to talk to the member about his views on auto insurance.

The Acting Speaker: That was not a point of order, but we are just trying to keep an even keel around here so people will not get upset. I passed the window this morning and the birds

were waking up. Now it seems like that is happening in here. We were doing fine for quite a long time.

The member from—near the guy from Guelph—I do not think you are in the right chair, are you?

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: You are. The other person.

An hon member: The member for Downsview.

The Acting Speaker: I know. I said beside Guelph.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Just take it easy. Come on. We have a few more hours to go with this.

Mr Kormos: Susan Berg from The Book Exchange at 625 King Street in Welland sends this postcard. I should tell you, Mr Speaker, that The Book Exchange is one heck of a bookstore. People come there from all over Welland, Wainfleet, Pelham, Ridgeway, Fort Erie, down in Welland, Ontario, at 625 King Street. Sue Berg, who is just a heck of a lady, has run that shop by herself and supported herself and her three kids for a long time.

She sends a postcard that says: "Dear Pete, The face of this card will give you something nicer than a lot of Liberal faces to look at, Susan. No-fault, no thanks." It is a picture of a locomotive on a 32-cent stamp, and I agree with her. I would rather look at a locomotive on a 32-cent stamp than this many Liberals any time.

We have more calls here. Mr Cooke called from Oakville. He is saying that if his member, one Mr—help me, Mr Speaker—Carrothers. Is that a member of the Legislative Assembly? That is who Mr Cooke would like to have call him.

Mr Callahan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: I remember Jack Stokes used to say there is nothing out of order and he would get in a big fight with everyone. Well, I am just trying to bounce along this morning, so what is your point of order?

Mr Callahan: I was given the telephone number of Tony DaSilva from my riding, 459-6134, and I want to check if that is the right number. Is it?

Interjections.

Mr Callahan: Mr Speaker, I ask you to intervene. My privilege as a member of this Legislature is to represent Brampton South. I just phoned and got a recorded statement that there is no such number.

Interjections.

Mr Callahan: I want the member to tell me whether the number that he gave to me of 459-6134, Tony DaSilva, is actually that of a member that I represent in the Legislature. My privileges have been breached if that number is a lie. If it is not in fact true, he can tell me if the number is correct.

The Acting Speaker: Come on, the member for Brampton South.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: This is not the place to find out.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: No, I am not buying it. It is a good try.

Mr Callahan: Mr Speaker—

The Acting Speaker: What do you want?

Mr Fulton: He is appealing the ruling of the Chair.

Mr Kormos: I should help the member for Brampton South. I can only say this, I do not know what number he dialled, but when I used to practise law, I would get these calls at two and three in the morning from people charged with impaired driving. Inevitably, the police would dial the number instead of letting the accused dial the number, because they would always foul it up and get somebody with a number that was close. I cannot explain what went wrong there, but maybe if the member knows any police officers—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: What? Where? What am I supposed to do?

Mrs Sullivan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: I do recognize the honourable member for Halton Centre.

Mrs Sullivan: Unfortunately, because the rules have changed, I cannot find the specific place, but I believe there was an innuendo in the remarks of the member for Welland-Thorold relating to the member for Brampton South and I believe we should ask the member for Welland-Thorold to withdraw his remarks.

The Acting Speaker: I have nothing but the highest regard for the chairperson of the select committee on energy. What were the remarks? I try to listen very closely when sitting in the chair to all that is taking place so that we do not run into difficulties. I had the opportunity of asking the leader of the official opposition to retract earlier, some time in the last 12 hours, which he very kindly did. I do not think the honourable member for Welland-Thorold had indicated anything to contravene our standing orders.

Mrs Sullivan: Mr Speaker, you have asked me a question. In my view, the remarks of the member for Welland-Thorold related to the competence, or to his judgement of the competence, or a judgement about the competence of the member for Brampton South. In my view, they were against the rules. Unfortunately, I cannot quote to you the specific rule, but indeed I believe that they are out of order. Not only are they out of order, but they are in fact prejudicial to the dignity of this House.

0610

Mr D. S. Cooke: Mr Speaker, perhaps you will want to take a look at Hansard and see whether the member for Halton Hills—

Mrs Sullivan: Halton Centre.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Since she cannot remember what the member for Welland-Thorold said, perhaps you can check for her and look it up. Mr Speaker, the member for Brampton South did accuse the member for Welland-Thorold of misleading the House and I would expect you to ask him to withdraw that.

The Acting Speaker: I wanted to bring that to the attention of the member for Halton Centre. We try to have some give and take here in terms of operating under our standing orders. The member for Halton Centre, whom I have nothing but the highest regard for—I am not going to investigate Hansard because I listened closely to the honourable member for Welland-

Thorold. Notwithstanding what you are searching for, I did not hear him say anything contrary to our standing orders.

It has been brought to my attention by the House leader of the official opposition that indeed the member for Brampton South did indicate that the member for Welland-Thorold was lying. I did hear that. And the House leader brought it to my attention. You see, that gets me in a tough position because when he does that, I have to turn to him and ask him to withdraw because I sort of heard him say it, but it was not while the microphone was on.

Mr Callahan: What I said was—and it was recorded by one of my colleagues—that the telephone number that was given—

Interjections.

Mr Callahan: Listen. Those guys talk too much; they do not listen. I was given a telephone number for a constituent of my riding which I think as a privilege of my membership in this House I am entitled to, and it was given to me as 459-

Interjections.

Mr Callahan: Listen. Why do those guys not settle down? I was given the number of 459-6134. It was recorded as well by a colleague of mine. If that is the wrong number, let him tell me. If it is not, then my accusation stands that they are either giving me the wrong number or they are misleading the House.

Mr B. Rae: The member for Brampton South has said to me on a number of occasions this morning that the phone calls we are receiving are fake and that they are somehow being invented. I want to say to the member that that is absolutely false. Anybody can sit in the lobby, and there have been lots of people sitting in the lobby, including for several hours the Attorney General earlier in the proceedings. He was there; he heard the phone ringing. If the member from Brampton does not believe that the people of Ontario think that the Liberals' insurance bill is a lousy bill and that they are phoning spontaneously to the Legislature, all I can say to you, Mr Speaker, is that the member from Brampton does not know what he is talking about it and that he is—

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: I am not going to recognize the member for Brampton South. He has had a good amount to say in the last few minutes. I have done my utmost to allow him to vent his steam. Now I want to bring to his attention that indeed he did not say the member lied. He said he was misleading the House. That is what it was, and he repeated it again. Now, you are not supposed to do that. It is getting on in the hour. I am a little tired; you are a little tired—

Mr Kormos: No, sir.

The Acting Speaker: Okay, the member for Welland-Thorold probably is not. That is wonderful. I want to ask the honourable member, please, never mind getting into the details about the phone calls. Just withdraw, as the official leader of the opposition did and the honourable member for Hamilton East did earlier in the day. Serving in this position, I have yet to have to name a member. I do not want to. Please withdraw.

Mr Callahan: Perhaps the member was mistaken, but certainly it was misleading because it is the wrong number.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: I do not recognize a point of order.

An hon member: A point of order is always in order.

The Acting Speaker: I have not finished with this point of order.

Mr Callahan: Mr Speaker, I have always considered the integrity of this House and honourable members always telling the truth. If I am mistaken, if the number is not 459-6134 and I have made a mistake or my colleague has, then I withdraw.

Mrs Sullivan: As you know, Mr Speaker, I was confused about this section of the standing orders, about which I was critical of the member for Welland-Thorold. I want to tell you that I would like to refer you to 23(h) (i) or (k), and perhaps you will take that into your consideration as the proceedings go on.

The Acting Speaker: Yes, I will recognize the honourable member for Halton Centre for bringing that to my attention. As I have indicated in the past, notwithstanding what some members think, when we are sitting in the chair we try not to doze. We try to listen to our monitors when we are in our room so that we can catch the flavour of the debate as it progresses. Under the circumstances, as I indicated, I had been listening to the member for Welland-Thorold and I have reprimanded him from time to time about what I think is improper use of language under our standing orders and parliamentary procedure. But in terms of specifically naming him under our standing orders section 23(h) (i), (j) and (k), as you indicated, I cannot recall any specific aspect where I would have to do that. But I will listen carefully on your advice and will do so at another time if it is required.

Casting my eyes about and seeing that there are no further points of order, the honourable member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos: Thanks once again, Mr Speaker. Some people just will never learn. Here is a note from a man from Brampton South who indicates that members should not be broadcasting numbers in the House. What a dummy; what a dumb thing for the member for Brampton South to do.

Mrs Cunningham called back and said that the calls are not phoney. She said that her member, the member for Scarborough Centre, had better vote against this bill.

Keith Matheson calls from Burford. He says, "Teach those Liberals a lesson."

Jim McCann called back. He made reference to the allegations, the accusations, of the member for Brampton South. Jim McCann wants Liberals to call him.

David Wolf calls again from Brampton. He obviously was agitated by what the member for Brampton South did. David Wolf expresses some embarrassment about the fact that his member is in the House. He is actually wishing that his member were not in the House. The member is obviously not doing so well with numbers this morning.

Anne Klar from Oakwood calls me and wants me to go on. She was a Liberal but no longer. Her member used to be a Liberal cabinet minister. What is her name? Heck, she is not even on the chart any more. Boy, when you get dumped from this cabinet, you sure get dumped. When you get Starr-struck, you get wiped right off the page; you are over to the right or somewhere of the whole page.

0620

Skip Bernstein from Markdale near Owen Sound. A call of support. He says we do not know enough about this legislation. That is why we want to have a debate.

Darlene from Barrie: "Bill 68 is bad."

Ron Butterworth from Collingwood: He says any Liberal can call. He made the mistake of voting Liberal last time but never again.

Doreen Young from Marathon: She hopes the Liberals get what they deserve this time; out on the street with the Premier of Ontario.

A message here says, "Your friends in Welland, keep up the good work." I appreciate them calling.

Jane Walker from Kingston, she is concerned about this time allocation motion. She said the Liberals need a glass of ice-cold water because they need to wake up.

Dave from Toronto: "Watching last night, leaving for work soon, opposed to what the Liberals are doing."

Omar Khan from Scarborough: He says no to Bill 68.

Brampton calls: "He is doing a great job; keep up the good work."

This is from Listowel, Ontario: "Good wishes. Lots of us are wondering why Ontario Liberals are like the federal Conservatives in turning their backs on the people."

Mr Hardman from Toronto: "No-fault stinks; we do not need it."

Now, Pat and Susan Johnston called up and, Mr Speaker, I hope your colleague is listening because Pat and Susan Johnston from Whitby say that "You and Sam"—I guess she is talking about me—"are the best show in town." I do not know who she meant by Sam. I appreciate Pat and Susan Johnston calling in.

Mr Lemar from Thorold called at 5:57 this morning: "Agree wholeheartedly." He says, "No-fault, no way. Liberals, no way."

George Oster voted Liberal before but says, "Now the Liberals are committing political suicide." That is what George Oster says.

George Bogaard in Oshawa supports what we are doing. There is the phone ringing.

Charles Taylor from Scarborough—Thanks for bringing them. Here is a whole lot more of these messages.

Jim McCann called back. He again was disgusted by the member for Brampton South's conduct. He wants Liberals to call him. That is, Jim McCann wants Liberals to call him. He lives in the riding of the member for St George-St David but Jim McCann would love to have members call him.

Lorne Brown called from Burlington. Lorne Brown just called and he said he would talk to the member for Brampton South but he would really prefer somebody with a little more maturity. Lorne Brown is prepared to talk to the member for Brampton South but would prefer somebody with a little more maturity. Lorne Brown, we understand, we understand.

Janet Wolford in Waterloo, she called—

Mrs Sullivan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It seems to me that the member recounted a message from a person named Norm Brown of Burlington relating to a call received. It seems to me that the House ought to have a more accurate account of that message and, in fact, if it were ever received, and if the message had been received as it was recounted in the House.

The Speaker: I guess that is a request. I do not think it is a point of order.

Mr Kormos: What I am going to do is—we have already subjected some people to having their telephone number bandied about. Now, let me tell you, Mr Speaker, this message from Lorne Brown in Burlington says that he would talk to the member for Brampton South, but he would prefer someone with more maturity. I am going to send this message down to you, Mr Speaker.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Not to her, to the Speaker. So there you go, Mr Speaker. That is the message; the proof is in the pudding.

Janet Wolford from Waterloo says that Bill 68 is a pain in the neck and three feet further down.

Mr Favaro from London says that our actions speak louder than the Liberals pre-election promises.

Don Clarke from Marathon—you know, Mr Speaker, the member for Halton Centre, why is she not listening to what these people have to say? You see, she is like so many other Liberals, she just wishes that all these people would disappear because her allegiance is to the interest of an auto insurance industry, not to the wellbeing of these good people, almost 400 of them, who have been phoning in over the last 12 hours.

The member for Halton Centre is just upset because nobody has been phoning her. They have tried, but the member for Halton Centre will not listen unless it is an insurance company executive. The member for Halton Centre will not listen unless it is a representative from that big, wealthy, powerful auto insurance industry here in the province of Ontario.

The Speaker: Order. Point of order.

Mrs Sullivan: On this one, I believe, I do have a point of order. I believe that the point of order relates to 23(i), imputing false or unavowed motives to another member, suggesting that I will only receive calls from insurance company executives. That is not the case. I speak to anyone who calls me from my constituency.

The Speaker: I have listened carefully to the member. I have found in the past that, in this House, when members are speaking they often give points of view, not always the same. The member gave his point of view; you gave your point of view.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, I tell you that Don Clarke from Marathon calls and says, "We are tired, we are watching, but we are not phoney." Don Clarke is quite right. The folks up in Marathon watching with Don Clarke deserve to be listened to. That is all that we are asking.

All that we are asking is for the Liberals here at Queen's Park to please listen to these voters, these drivers, these taxpayers.

Mr Philip: Linda Clarke will send a photocopy of her phone bill and she wants the Liberals to pay it.

Mr Kormos: Linda Clarke from Marathon is prepared to send a copy of her phone bill to the member for Brampton South, as long as he pays for it. Linda Clarke from Marathon wants to send a phone bill to the Liberal caucus so that they can pay it.

Joe Bugeja agrees 100 per cent. There is the phone ringing again. He thinks that the Minister of Financial Institutions should resign his seat. North Bay says "Keep going."

Stan Donovan says, "Keep going." He says, "I paid for this call." That is to say he paid for it himself. He says, "The Liberal member for Hamilton Centre will pay for this bill."

Ann Clarke from Toronto calls in and says, "She resents the accusations of false calls." She is speaking of her member who was that ex-cabinet minister, the member for Oakwood; how soon we forget.

Terry Hagarty from Agincourt says, "Keep it up."

David Agnew from Windsor says, "Keep going until the member for Halton Centre drops."

0630

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: I brought a soother. If the member for Halton Centre wants it, I can send it over to her. She is doing an awful lot of whining and squealing. This kind of plug would quieten her up and it is perhaps fitting. We expected we would need one before the night was over. It is called a pacifier.

Charles Taylor from Scarborough called, Bob Sterling—we talked about him—Mr Cooke and Dr Paul from Toronto. We talked about Paul Barnsley. Mark State was in the gallery earlier. He is calling on behalf of Carter Brown, who is still in the gallery, at least he was when he called.

Brother J. State was a Liberal but now says, "Time for a change in government." Here is a fellow who came down and saw with his own eyes. Here is a fellow who knows what the time allocation motion is all about, who knows that it is a crummy antidemocratic motion; here is a fellow who has seen the conduct of the Liberals at first hand, not censored, if you will, by virtue of the restrictions placed on the cameras here in the Legislature. Notwithstanding that he has been a Liberal, he comes here and sees what is happening. That is why every day of this Legislature these galleries should be filled.

Mrs Payson of St Catharines takes exception to the member for Brampton South for saying the calls are phoney. She is getting really upset with the Liberals: "They're running scared." They are. They are running scared. She says: "Excellent job. Keep on doing it."

Breda and Anna Yates from Kitchener support our action. Mitch Temesy from Amherstburg: "With you. Appreciate what you are doing. Want to see you at five am," when he gets up. He saw us at five am when he got up. He saw us at 6 am and he is seeing now at 6:30. It is 6:30 in the morning on Friday 27 April 1990.

Victor Wiens from Pembroke says: "Bill 68 is really unfair. Seniors won't be able to pay increases under Bill 68." I do not know what the count is there now in terms of the number of telephone messages that have been phoned in. Over 500 people have called in on the two phone lines that we have had available to us. Over 500 people have called in over the last 12 hours to express condemnation of Bill 68 and of what the Liberals are doing here at Queen's Park.

Enoch Cheung from Willowdale: "Liberals should get hearing aids to help them listen. Keep going," Enoch Cheung says.

Emily and Bill Prince of Oakville; Mrs Prince calls to say that her member, and her member is the member for Halton Centre, should vote against Bill 68. Emily and Bill Prince are not going to wait for Halton Centre to call them. They are going to call her. Emily and Bill Prince might give a call to the member for Halton Centre right now.

Rob City says, "Books are fictitious; concerned people aren't." Here is Roberta Corrie, Willowdale, a staunch Tory but joining with us today. Jodie Brown from Windsor called to say that she was going to bed, which is where a whole bunch of people here should be.

Gerry Forbes of CKFM wants to send me a number; CKFM, good for them. Dave Martin, Weston: "Doing a fine job. Hang tough." Robert Colterman, Scarborough: "Glad somebody has the guts to stand up to these guys."

Eru Stach was at the public hearings in Thunder Bay. He knows that the Minister of Financial Institutions was not there. Eru Stach from Thunder Bay knows that the Minister of Financial Institutions did not come to Thunder Bay. Do you want to know something else, Mr Speaker? He did not go to Sudbury

either. He did not go to Windsor, did not go to Ottawa, did not even come here to Toronto other than that first afternoon. Eru Stach says, "At the public hearings in Thunder Bay, large numbers opposed Bill 68." We are trying to accomplish open debate against a bad bill; he thinks that is okay.

People are calling. Karen Findlay from High Park-Swansea says we are doing a fantastic job; "Keep going."

Jack Richards from Brampton, the home of the member for Brampton South perhaps—

An hon member: He's not here.

Mr Kormos: I am sorry? Did somebody make mention of the presence or absence of the member for Brampton South?

Jack Richards from Brampton says, "If Mr Smith Goes to Washington can do it, so can Pete." I tell you, we are in colour; Mr Smith Goes to Washington was in black and white.

Kathryn Derouchie from Cambridge says, "Keep up the good work." We already talked about Richard Harmon and Dave Flemming. We talked about Mr Cram.

We did not mention Horst Romar: "The Premier's hand is so crazy and cruel just to show us Liberal rule. It just goes to show that the Liberal way must give in to public opinion some day." Horst Romar from Kitchener has done a couple of couplets here that would make poets proud. Horst Romar says, "No way."

A man from Burlington wonders whether those who follow the Premier's tune realize what happened to those who followed the Pied Piper. Here are more calls. Lou Bortnick from Willowdale says he made a big mistake voting Liberal last time.

Ms Duquette from North Bay called earlier. She is fed up with the Liberal from Halton Centre, who keeps jumping up and down. Ms Duquette paid for this long-distance call just to say that she was fed up with those sorts of antics.

Port Colborne says: "Give Peter credit. Have faith in him. Keep it up. Bill 68 is as bad as GST." You want to know something, Mr Speaker? This closure motion on the part of the Liberals is as bad as the closure motion used by Brian Mulroney in Ottawa to push the GST through. Not only is the legislation as bad as the GST, the tactics are the same as the ones the Liberals in Ottawa are using.

People are on their way to work. People are getting ready to carry on with their busy schedules. I know there have been people paying attention to this all night and they have got to be a little tired. But I want people to know that they are entitled to come down here to Queen's Park on their way to work this morning to see what has happened to democracy, to see what the Liberals are doing with their Mulroney tactics, with their closure motions—

0640

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: A point of order.

Mr R. F. Johnston: I am not sure whether I can find it in the standing orders, and perhaps you can help me with this.

Il est une de nos traditions dans cette Chambre-ci d'avoir disponible la traduction simultanée pour les francophones de la province. Un principe qu'on accepte ici, c'est que les francophones et les anglophones peuvent avoir le même droit de suivre les discours de la Chambre.

Maintenant, à cause d'un manque de préparation de la part du gouvernement, un manque d'avis de la part des greffiers, etc, nous n'avons pas la traduction simultanée en Chambre.

À mon avis, c'est quelque chose d'affreux et c'est très important pour vous en tant que président de le considérer. Est-ce

possible que nous laissons tomber toutes nos traditions, ici, d'égalité dans la province ? Est-ce possible pour nous d'avoir un discours, des débats qui continuent sans avoir de traduction ? Il est acceptable pour les anglophones qui aimeraient avoir des renseignements au sujet de ce qui se passe ici, mais pas pour les francophones.

J'aimerais savoir s'il est possible pour nous de continuer dans cette Chambre maintenant sans avoir la traduction ? C'est une inégalité, n'est-ce pas ?

The Speaker: I listened very carefully to what the honourable member has said. I appreciate his drawing to my attention that the simultaneous translation is not available. I was not aware that it was not available at the moment. However, I will certainly look into it and report back to the House as soon as I can.

Mr Kormos: What a strange—

Mr Allen: Boy, that's neat, isn't it? Isn't that nice.

The Speaker: Order. It is being taken by Hansard and it is also being recorded by the electronic Hansard, which I believe is required, and I will certainly look into it and report back as soon as I can.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, you will remember we were talking about Ralph Nader's visit to Queen's Park to talk to the standing committee on general government about Bill 68.

Here is a call from Steve Latinovich. The Latinovich family goes back quite a way. Casey Latinovich, Steve and Mike's father and a few other brothers—Steve is a great hockey player, by the way. He played some really good hockey here in Canada, and—

Interjections.

Mr Kormos: It is true. Steve Latinovich is well known throughout Europe, where his professional hockey career took him, playing for European leagues. Steve and Mike are both active in the community in a variety of ways, not just in their own jobs, profoundly making a good impact on the community, but are involved in volunteer work with youngsters and always eager to lend a hand.

But Steve Latinovich says, "The motion to allocate time by henchmen of Adolf, and if only one voice is going to be heard, all the members should go home."

Mr B. Rae: Mr Speaker, on a point of order.

The Speaker: A point of order.

Mr B. Rae: I hesitate to interrupt my colleague the member for Welland-Thorold, who is doing such a superb job on behalf of the people of the province, but it is a substantive point that has been raised by my colleague the member for Scarborough West. I have been looking through the rules—obviously, very quickly. I do not find anything in the rules with respect to the question, and it may be because I have not found it. But the fact of the matter is that, by virtue of an agreement between the parties, we have always operated on the basis that when the House is in session simultaneous translation will be provided.

I think we are entitled to a report from the government House leader as to why it would be that the Liberals would agree to the House continuing to sit when those services are not being provided. I think that it is an important point, not one that I raise lightly. Particularly in light of everything else that is happening in the province these days, and indeed in the country, it might be a good idea whether the government could tell us

whether it is now its policy that it will require the House to sit without providing translation services.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The government House leader, on the point of order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Ward: On the point of order that was raised by the leader of the official opposition, I guess it does not surprise me that he is so singularly uninformed that he does not realize that the government does not control the operations of this assembly. In fact, that is done by the Speaker and through the Board of Internal Economy. They do not take directions from the government with regard to issues such as security, the opening of the galleries or the translation.

I would suggest to the member that a motion has been made and suggested. The Speaker has indicated that he will reserve a decision. The standing orders do say that you cannot reflect upon a decision by the Speaker and I would suggest he let the debate continue.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Mr Speaker, I think the government House leader is correct, obviously, that it is your responsibility. I think it is also your responsibility, since this important service is not being provided to the Legislature now while we are in session, to adjourn the House until the service can be in order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I listened carefully to the point the Leader of the Opposition made in regard to the comment I made previously on the previous point of order, and I listened to the government House leader and I listened to the official opposition House leader. We have so many translators on staff. I was not aware that they had gone home. I took it seriously when it was brought to my attention and I will certainly, as soon as possible, find out what has happened and report to the House.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Mr Speaker, I appreciate the fact that you are going to report to the House and I would expect you to report to the House. But in the meantime, we do not have a service that is expected in this province, especially in consideration of the fact that we have passed Bill 8. We expect these services to be provided across the province, and this place should be an example and you have got to show that example. I would ask you to adjourn the House and show an example for this place.

0650

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr D. S. Cooke: You have no choice, Mr Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Ward: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member for Windsor-Riverside probably does not like the fact that the debate in this House is covered by the rules of debate. The rules of debate state only that, "Every member desiring to speak must rise in his or her place and address the Speaker, in either English or French." There is no provision in the standing

orders for anything beyond that. I would suggest that the rules of debate are being followed and the debate should proceed.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr D. S. Cooke: When the standing committees have travelled this province during the break, this was of great consideration of the chairpeople of the various committees, whether simultaneous translation was going to be provided. It was provided in each of the designated areas or where the hearings were being held, even in Thunder Bay, which is not a designated area but where presentations were going to be brought in from communities that were covered by designated areas.

Mr Speaker, I am asking you, not the government House leader or the other members of the House, to use your judgement and to recognize that this is very important and that you should exercise proper judgement and adjourn the House now.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Finished?

I listened carefully to the member for Windsor-Riverside. I appreciate what he has said and the request he has made to the House. I would ask for his consideration that I, within the next 15 or 20 minutes, see what I can do to see that it is reinstalled.

Mr D. S. Cooke: So in the meantime the House can recess.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. No, I would appreciate if the member would give me that opportunity to see what I can do.

Interjection.

The Speaker: No, let the members continue.

Mr Allen: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: In this House when we consider points of order we often make reference to catalogues of precedent that have been established in various legislatures and in our own as to how we conduct ourselves and how we interpret the fairly simple, straight rule that the government House leader offered. I think one would have to concede that the precedent is now well and thoroughly established in this House that we are addressing, whenever we are assembled together, two language constituencies and that not only do we therefore do that as a matter of convenience but we have recognized it as a matter of right with respect to both of those two language constituencies.

For us now to proceed, having recognized that fact, regardless of who awoke at what time to the fact that the simultaneous translation had stopped, now that we are aware of that fact it seems to me it is absolutely incumbent upon this House, and certainly symbolically incredibly important for us, what decision we make at this very point in time. We are now aware of something, and if we decide now to continue we will be, I think, establishing a very regrettable change in that precedent, that we do this as a matter, somehow, of convenience and not as a matter of right to the persons of those two language groups in this province, that one now suddenly assumes quite a different status than the other.

That equality was present in the context of years of activity since the institution of simultaneous translation. For us now to alter that by implication in any way is an extremely serious step. I wish you would take that argument to heart and at the very least adjourn this House until you come back with a decision as to the force of that argument.

An hon member: I am surprised that you would take part in that debate.

Mr Allen: Are you indeed, Mr Whatever-Your-Name-Is from—

The Speaker: Order. In response, I have checked the standing orders. There is nothing in the standing orders that says it must take place. Therefore, I request that we continue the debate and I will, if I have someone here in the chair, go out and ascertain how long it will take and be back to the House.

Mr Kormos: I have some great concern for the dilemma that the Speaker is in. I therefore move adjournment of the House.

The Speaker: The honourable member has moved the adjournment of the House. I believe there has not been another proceeding that has taken place other than debate. Therefore, I cannot accept.

Mr Kormos: My apologies, Mr Speaker. In view of that, and I have a number of things I want to talk about, I feel compelled none the less to move adjournment of the debate.

0726

The House divided on Mr Kormos's motion, which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 10; nays 25.

The Speaker: Prior to the vote, I advised the House that I would take under consideration the matter that was raised on a point of order. I have looked at the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly's Report on Simultaneous Interpretation, which was presented by the committee on 12 June 1986. On 10 July 1986, the House approved that report.

I would like to inform the members on some of the items that are in that report. It states that:

"1. Simultaneous interpretation be provided of all proceedings in the legislative chamber.

"2. Simultaneous interpretation be provided of all committee proceedings in the Amethyst Room."

There are other recommendations. However, I think the one that might be of interest to the members would be recommendation 6, which says, "A simultaneous interpretation unit, composed of seven full-time employees of the Office of the Assembly (three for the House, three for the Amethyst Room and one backup interpreter) be established."

This has been done, so we have three interpreters and one backup for the House and three for the Amethyst Room.

Because the House approved these recommendations, I would like to inform the members that the interpreters are on their way and should be here at any moment, but I feel it would be my responsibility, because the House has passed that set of recommendations, to suspend proceedings to the call of the Chair when, in a very short time, the interpreters will be present. I will not be ringing the bells. I will inform the member who has the floor when the interpreters are here and I will return to the House. I thank the members for bringing this matter to my attention.

The House recessed at 0732.

0752

The Speaker: Everything seems to be in order.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: It struck me earlier on as well that it is very important that we

have accurate recording of our proceedings here, which is one of the reasons I raised the question of French translation not being available. But the other thing that has struck me is that the normal assistance we receive from Hansard, people who record the interjections and the responses, has not been available.

As you know, under standing order 20(b) interjections are not admissible, within the standing orders at any rate, but from time to time the person who has the floor tends to respond to somebody who is making an interjection. Without those recordings here, because we no longer have what was called the garbage track in the old days, there is no way of being sure that we are getting an accurate recording of what is taking place here in the House.

I would ask the Speaker to rule on whether or not we can actually have an accurate recording of the proceedings when we do not have those people here who are recording from time to time the actual interjections which are taking place, to which the member for Welland-Thorold may from time to time refer.

Hon Mr Ward: I would just point out that this Legislative Assembly is served by electronic Hansard, both audio as well as video. Frankly, I do not see what impact there is in not having, as happens from time to time, someone at the desk.

The Speaker: Thank you for drawing that to my attention. As a matter of fact, I realized that myself some time ago. I believe it is in order to have Hansard and to have electronic Hansard. The tapes are rolling in both rooms and I feel it is within order to continue.

Mr Kormos: Mr Speaker, I cannot begin to tell you how much correspondence we have received from across the province of Ontario about this time allocation motion. One of the things I have tried to do as best I can is impress upon you and the members of this assembly how much there is to be said about Bill 68 and what there is to be said about how bad Bill 68 is going to be for so many people right here in the province of Ontario.

I tell you, Mr Speaker, the greatest danger that could be performed by this Legislative Assembly would be to underestimate the serious and significant impact of this bad bit of legislation and to underestimate the scope of the interest and, more importantly, concern by people from all walks of life from across Ontario.

William Gillan wrote to me on 23 April and he said: "Thank you for your efforts on our behalf in speaking out against the motion introduced by"—and he put this in quotation marks—"our government" to limit debate on the automobile insurance act. If this act is the culmination of a specific plan to lower automobile insurance premiums I think you will find the enclosure interesting." This quote is attached: "When you give an assurance or promise or make a sworn intention, you obligate yourself to make it come to pass. If you say you are going to do something, you should do it. One's regard for another is based in no small degree on whether or not the person keeps his or her word. People who keep their word are trusted and admired, while those who break it often never get another chance."

It should be clear why Bill Gillan from Scarborough felt it was important to send that little comment to me because, as you know, Mr Speaker, back in September 1987 the Premier of Ontario promised the people of Ontario that he, the Premier, had a very specific plan to lower auto insurance premiums. That was the intent, that was the effect and that was the content of

what he said in Cambridge, Ontario, three days before the general election in September 1987.

So I put that to the members. That was an assurance or a promise, no two ways about it. The Premier promised that back in September 1987, almost three years ago now. "If you say you are going to do something, you should do it." The Premier said he had a very specific plan. He did not even promise something in the future. He did not say, "I'm going to look for a specific plan," but he promised the electorate that he had a very specific plan. Look at the conclusion that has to be reached, the conclusion that one is irresistibly drawn to: "People who keep their word are trusted and admired."

One can question, and many, many do here in the province of Ontario, whether or not the Premier kept his word, because people who keep their word are trusted and admired, while those who break it often never get another chance. That is exactly what the 500 or so phone callers have said over the last 12, 13, 14 hours. Even in the days preceding this, in the phone calls, the cards and the letters, literally hundreds and hundreds of cards and letters, people in Ontario are saying that the Liberals may never get another chance because the Liberals broke their promise and the Premier of Ontario broke his promise that he had a very specific plan to reduce automobile insurance premiums here in the province of Ontario. So Bill Gillan's comments are most appropriate.

Phone calls are still coming in. People are calling the two telephones that we have personned in the members' gallery behind us here. We could not give our office numbers because our office staff have gone home, but people have been continuing to call 965-1224. People are still calling and I can still hear the phones ringing right behind me—965-1224. If that line is busy, they are trying 965-1239. People on those two lines have been working for the last 14 hours. That is how long ago this most recent bit of comment on my part began about this just incredibly bad, this incredibly cruel, this incredibly disrespectful time allocation motion, this so Mulroney-like motion. It is a Mulroney-like motion. Once again, as I told members so many times, really all it does is illustrate that Liberals are Tories too.

0800

That is why Ted O'Halleran calls in from Willowdale. Now some members, whose attention has not been good overnight, should not confuse that with Hanrahan, because Hanrahan called too. This time it is O'Halleran from Willowdale. He agrees with the opposition.

An interesting one is one from Paul Zippel from Walkerton. Guess what Minister of Financial Institutions' riding Mr Zippel is from? Mr Zippel calls in to us this morning. He watched this debate until 1 am. He had to go to bed; he had work to do today. He says it is unfortunate and sad that this type of Mulroney closure motion could happen in a democracy.

Chris and Pat Meskis call in. They are from Welland. They said they have not seen such a good job since Jimmy Stewart in Mr Smith Goes to Washington. I tell you once again, Mr Speaker, that Capra movie is a great one; but this is in colour. With all due respect to Jimmy Stewart and to Frank Capra, Mr Smith Goes to Washington is, as I recall it, in black and white.

John and Yvette Gore from Cobalt, Ontario, phone to say thank you. They say what has been going on with this Liberal attempt to shut down debate is disgusting. They have been trying since 7:30 last night to get through. They finally got through to one of the telephone lines. People who have pens will write these down: 965-1224 or 965-1239.

Mr Philip: I do not think the member or the Pope are ready for this, but this man says "Peter Kormos is a saint." The member is too humble a person to read that, so I wanted to let it be known.

Mr Kormos: Well, what this man from Hamilton says is that the Liberals just ain't going to get away with it. Just watch. You know what happens, Mr Speaker? It is like the dentist with the drill. When you get close to a nerve, they start screaming. These guys need another shot of Novocain. How many times is it over the course of the night? People are phoning us. Over 500 people have phoned us over the course of the last 14 hours, keeping two phone lines busy back here in our gallery.

The Attorney General of Ontario spent a couple of hours back there listening to the people answering those calls, and he was welcome. Any Liberal member would have been welcome to come back there and see the impact that this bad legislation is having on people across Ontario and see how completely and thoroughly opposed people in Ontario from all walks of life and from all parts of Ontario are to time allocation, to closure and, bottom line, to Bill 68. This auto insurance legislation is a threshold scheme.

Mr Gorham calls from London. He had called earlier, and I recall that. He had called at midnight. His family has been Liberal since 1930. He has been staying with us all night and all morning. I remember Mr Gorham's call from London. I read his comments out shortly after midnight. He has been with us ever since midnight. It is 8:04 in the morning now. He is staying with us to see what kind of surgery the Liberals are going to perform on his pocketbook. When Mr Gorham says there is a need for reform in our health care system, he ain't whistling Dixie.

Marge and Don Sayres are from Windsor. They called in this morning. They were Liberal; they are now New Democrats. I say, good for them, because we are not beholden to the auto insurance industry. We have no intention of fighting for big profits for the auto insurance industry. We have no intentions of doing that at all. The auto insurance industry has got its spokespeople right over here in the Liberal caucus. That is where the auto insurance industry's spokespeople are. The auto insurance industry pays them big bucks come election time; big, big donations. We are talking about 100 Gs at a crack. In the last general election, we are talking about 100 grand plus that the insurance industry gives to these Liberals as a campaign contribution. My goodness.

Don Comi, the head of the Niagara District Injured Workers' Organization, called back again. He had been watching all night. He mentions that some time ago the Legislature burned down. Well, the Liberals just want to shut it down. The Liberals are not going to burn it down; they just want to shut it down, lock it up and keep the opposition out of any debate.

Burt Dandy on Manitoulin Island calls to say "Keep it up." He may well still be a Liberal, but he says to keep it up and he says when people find out what is in Bill 68, they oppose it, as compared to simply reading what their local Liberal member puts out in fluffy little householders that have lots of words and say nothing.

Doug Dixon from Mississauga says, "Great job; full support; if Patti is a snake, then the Premier is a serpent king." Interesting play on words. Doug Dixon is a little bit of a wordsmith himself.

Sandra Ellis was up till 5:30 this morning. She is from right here in Toronto. She is coming on down to the Legislature, as she is entitled to do. We have got galleries here that will seat a whole lot of people. This is their building, is it not? This build-

ing belongs to the people of Ontario. There was a time last night when we had some real concerns. We in the New Democratic Party were scared about the message that was being given for at least a little while last night, because the Liberal House leader, who planned this whole jaunt into the late evening and early morning hours, neglected to arrange for staff to accommodate visitors who would want to see—and have every right to see—what is going on here at Queen's Park.

0810

The Liberal House leader not only does not want to debate Bill 68, but also he would like to see the public excluded from this chamber. I bet dollars to doughnuts that if the House leader had some way of pulling the plug on these TV cameras and the cable TV coverage, he would do it. The Liberal House leader would not have been happier to avoid the 500-plus phone calls that came because the television cameras provided a window here into Queen's Park.

The Liberals do not want to debate Bill 68. The Liberals want to impose closure on Bill 68 so that it does not get submitted to any real debate.

We are opposed to this time allocation motion and so are the people of Ontario.

George Baker from Keswick, Ontario—and that is just about as good a place to live as anywhere here in Ontario; it is a great community—says, "No-fault, no way." He says "no damned way" he is voting Liberal again. He is going to vote New Democrat. That is what George Baker just told our people sitting back here right behind me answering the phones. These are people who are answering the phone numbers 965-1224 and 965-1239.

N. Manji calls in from Don Mills, Ontario. He says: "Great job. Keep it up." He says the Liberals are the slaves of the big corporations.

Betty Smith from Toronto says, "Keep it up." She speaks of the shabby treatment of this whole scenario by the Liberals.

A caller from Oshawa asks, "What's the Liberal government going to do when the majority of kids start driving without insurance because it's unaffordable or simply unavailable?"

Ron Paroschy says he is from the land of Otto Jelinek. Ron Paroschy says, "Keep it up."

Anna calls: "Keep it going. Wish you all the luck." She says she has been trying to call for hours.

Shirley Shapiro says, "We don't need a dictator around here in Ontario."

Dick Foster from Toronto says, "Phone on." He is opposed to Bill 68.

Jackie Stanicki is from Welland. I know Jackie. Jackie is a fine young lady, a bright, young professional working with children in child care and working with young, disabled adults. Jackie is a bright, worldly young woman. She says it is pitiful that the opposition has to go to these lengths to oppose this bill. She wishes there was more democracy here at Queen's Park. She is right. It is a shame.

John Goy, from Miller Lake in the Bruce Peninsula, has been the victim of an automobile accident. He is very much opposed—

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would note that there is not one Tory in the House still and there has not been one for most of the night. It seems to me that we are short of a quorum.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

0817

The Acting Speaker: I have been advised that a quorum is present. That being the case, the honourable member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos: I was telling you about John Goy from Miller Lake in the Bruce Peninsula. He called in to either 416—that is our area code—965-1239 or 965-1224. John Goy has been a victim of a motor vehicle accident. He is very much opposed to Bill 68. More important, he understands that a discussion of Bill 68 requires a thorough consideration of all of the facets of the legislation, which means that the time allocation motion, the one the Liberals are trying to ram through, has to be opposed.

I have pleaded with the Liberal House leader to please withdraw this time allocation motion, but he will not.

Margaret Haley—I hear those phones ringing—from Brampton says: “Keep going, Pete. We like what you are doing.”

John Whitehead from Toronto and Jeff Harrington are both against Bill 68, and they are against a government that would try to muzzle the opposition. He shows such disdain for the parliamentary process.

Bill Cruse from Downsview calls us this morning to tell us that Bill 68 is more of a pain than his toothache. Chris Cutler phones from Flamboro to say that we are speaking for a lot of them out there.

Did I mention that Willie Nelson had called? Perhaps it is Wilson. People back there are so hurried in their message-taking because the phones just keep ringing. He calls and wishes us well, and I certainly wish him well. He says we are doing a good job, and I appreciate Willie giving us a call. I know you do, Mr Speaker, because he is from St Catharines, and it is important for members of this assembly to understand that the opposition to this time allocation motion is not restricted to one pocket, one narrow chunk of Ontario. It is widespread across Ontario.

Mr Coleman from Clifford, Ontario, calls and says, “Put the jackboots down on the Liberals.”

Colette Lecompte from Thorold says that what she plans on doing is writing to the member for Brampton South and sending him her phone bills, so that the member for Brampton South can pay the charges for her calls to Queen's Park last night and early this morning. Maybe the member for Brampton South, when he gets the phone bill from Colette Lecompte, would grace her with some acceptance of responsibility by paying those long-distance telephone charges.

Peter and Marta Feifil say they are embarrassed that they voted Liberal in the last election and if Bill 68 is passed, they will do their utmost to fight the Liberals.

Bev Agar from High Park-Swansea is very much opposed to what the Liberals are doing.

Here are more calls. David Fraser from Georgetown says that he used to be a Liberal. He is now a New Democrat. He drives for a living. He knows how important affordable and available insurance is and, quite frankly, he knows how important it is to have a full debate on the issue. How can you cast a meaningful vote about Bill 68 unless there is full debate.

A young woman resident of Massey, Ontario, calls to say that she is sure not keen on this insurance bill and that this debate is the greatest thing she has seen yet. Randy Heinz from Midland calls in. He wonders whether he is going to be able to get assistance from the government to pay these rate hikes.

Tom Hogg from Scarborough says, “If the insurance companies get away with this”—Look what people are saying. You see, Tom Hogg is not even saying, “If the Liberals get away with it”; he is saying, “If the insurance companies get away with this, it may become too expensive to drive.”

Dawn Breault is a wonderful young lady from Welland, Ontario. I know Dawn, she is a great lady. She worked as a nurse in the psychiatric ward in Welland for a long time. She was well respected by her peers, well respected by her supervisory people, all the doctors, all the other nurses and I tell you, the patients had nothing but positive things to say about her. Perhaps there is no greater compliment that could be paid to a worker like Dawn Breault, who is a very dedicated psychiatric nurse.

However, as a result of a motor vehicle accident—once again, Dawn was a completely innocent injured victim—she is not able to work. She is not able to do the work. Dawn Breault knows that if that accident had happened after Bill 68, it would have been a non-compensable one. Dawn Breault and people like her know that Bill 68 is all about taking compensation away from innocent injured victims and charging greater and greater and higher and higher premiums.

Here is an interesting call from Debbie Boychuk. She lives in Brampton South. She lives there, but she phones in to say that she is considering moving to Welland. I tell Debbie Boychuk to come on down to Welland-Thorold and we will do the best we can to make it as easy as possible. We have got a mayor down there, Mayor Roland Hardy, or Bill Longo from up in Thorold. They would be glad to show her around. We have got housing—rural, urban, high-rises, low-rises. Debbie Boychuk would enjoy it down in Brampton South. I would like to think that Debbie Boychuk could feel comfortable that she lives in a riding where the interests of the people who live there are reflected in what their member does in the Legislative Assembly and not the interests of a big, wealthy, powerful corporate group of insurance companies.

I got a call from Rick Mann. I think he called in earlier, I am not sure, the name rings a bell. Quite right, there was a Mann from Niagara Falls. It is not an uncommon name. Rick Mann from London, though, calls in. He apologizes for sending the Premier to Queen's Park. It is not Mr Mann's fault alone. It took more than just Mr Mann, so he should not have to bear all that responsibility.

Conrad Limoge from Windsor calls to say, “Good job.” He says, “What are the companies going to do with all the money?” He is right. That is why we are fighting this time allocation motion with everything we have got.

You know, Mr Speaker, as I told you earlier this morning, this is my last chance. Once I give up the floor, once I have finished talking—and I have been talking on this one today for 14 1/2 hours, and that has been steady and before that we had talked for some 23 1/2 hours. So we are talking about 38 hours that we have been talking about this, and we mean everything we say, and I am afraid, I am scared, because I have canvassed the issues.

Look at the material, Mr Speaker, that I want to draw your attention to. It is spread out across the floor in file folders and in binders and piled up on these chairs. I want to bring your attention to this material because a whole lot of it is submissions that were made to the standing committee on general government, and the Minister of Financial Institutions was not there to hear those submissions being made, just like the minister was not there on 15 January, when Ralph Nader came before the com-

mittee to share with us his familiarity with this type of insurance, this threshold insurance.

So I am frightened. I am afraid that perhaps I am not eloquent enough. Perhaps I have not and will not have spent enough time discussing this. Perhaps I have not been able to argue the issues effectively. I am fearful that I have not done service to those people we seek to protect, the taxpayers of Ontario who are going to be out some \$141 million to \$143 million if this bill goes through, because that is the extent of direct taxpayer subsidy of the private corporate auto insurance industry here in the province of Ontario if Bill 68 passes.

I am fearful for the drivers of Ontario, because if these Liberals are permitted to pass Bill 68, the drivers of Ontario are going to face premium increases of up to 50 per cent, and we have just learned in the last couple of weeks that for almost one third of a million Ontario drivers there are going to be premium increases of up to 80 per cent.

So I am afraid for the drivers of Ontario, and mostly I am afraid for the innocent injured victims. I am afraid for the victims of the drunk drivers and the careless drivers and the negligent drivers. I am afraid for the victims who suffer broken legs and broken arms and broken backs and fractured skulls and who, notwithstanding the fact that they endure pain none of us have fortunately ever had to even imagine, notwithstanding the fact that as a result of these injuries they are going to suffer a loss of enjoyment of life that no reasonable person could deny, these same people, because of Bill 68 and the greed of the auto insurance industry and the willingness of the Liberals at Queen's Park to sell out the drivers and the taxpayers and the innocent, injured victims, because of that—

An hon member: A point of order, Mr Speaker. Would you determine whether there is a quorum in the House or not?

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

0833

Mr Kormos: [Failure of sound system] The Liberals are the ones who at five minutes to six yesterday moved to abandon six o'clock as a closing time for the Legislative Assembly. They kept the security staff here all night. They kept the other Queen's Park staff here all night.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: I do not mind being here. But if these guys cannot stand the heat, well then get out of the kitchen. If these guys cannot muster up the energy to do one of their all-nighters, well then do not call for all-nighters. If these guys would do a little less sucking and blowing, this whole province would be further ahead, because what I am trying to tell you, Mr Speaker, is that we in the NDP are not beholden to the auto insurance industry.

Thank you; there are more calls coming in from people across the province of Ontario.

Pat McGovern from Scarborough says she is speaking on behalf of her husband, too. She says she is disgusted with the arrogance of the Peterson government—Peterson, I am sorry, the Liberal government, because I know that you as a Speaker do not like it when I refer to members by their names. We are talking about the millionaire's government, the millionaire boys' club. Really that is what it is, is it not, the millionaire backroom boys' club?

We are talking about a Premier who is a millionaire who has never had to work to support himself or his family in his whole life, who does not know what it means to fulfil commit-

ments to a mortgagee, a bank or a credit union that is on your back because you missed a payment because you had no choice, because you got laid off for a month at a time. When you have assets of \$1 million and change, you do not worry about layoffs. You just clip the coupons. You just have the bankbook validated once every few weeks.

What we are getting to is the source of the disdain that the Premier and his party have for due process here in the parliamentary assembly. That is why Pat McGovern from Scarborough says: "This government was elected to represent people, not insurance companies. Why don't they start representing the people?" Dale Wilson from Scarborough says that we are going to get true democracy by opposing this time allocation motion and by permitting a full, healthy and careful debate.

Brian Winfield from Gananoque calls and says, "Are the Liberals going to ask the insurance companies to reduce premiums in view of the fact that the insurance companies are going to be making fistfuls of big bucks?" That is Brian Winfield from Gananoque. Tom David says, "Keep it up." Tom David said he had never voted New Democrat before but he is going to now.

Diana and Jay State from Hamilton phone in with support for our position. They are deeply concerned that the Liberals are taking away the rights of individuals. They are concerned that the public has not been fully apprised of what is going to be happening under Bill 68 and the concern that we are slipping into a totalitarian society.

Jim Williamson and Gary Adam called from St Catharines. They appreciate what the opposition is doing.

Mr R. F. Johnston: The official opposition. The Tories aren't here. Make that clear.

Mr Kormos: Florence Brochu has known me for a long, long time, ever since I was—well, she has known me for a long time. Florence Brochu calls and says, "It's the opposition that is speaking for the little guy." We are proud to do that. We all thank Florence Brochu for calling in. We are pleased to talk to people like Florence Brochu. She is one of the people that make this province great.

It ain't the insurance companies that make this province great; it ain't the big developers; it ain't millionaire premiers that make this province great, not by a long shot, not by any stretch of the imagination. Anybody who thinks that way had better reassess what is going on around them. It is people like Florence Brochu. It is hard-working people who take chances every day and who expect their government to protect them at least a little bit from the wealthy, the powerful and the big corporations.

John Hill from London is a university student. He knows that Bill 68 would adversely affect him. That is why he wants to see Bill 68 thoroughly debated right here at Queen's Park. You know, Mr Speaker, people ask me why I am filibustering and I have to explain to them I am not filibustering. I looked "filibuster" up in the dictionary and "filibuster" is a uniquely American thing that you cannot do in parliamentary systems. To filibuster means to obstruct. We are not obstructing. We wanted to discuss Bill 68 a long time ago. Rather than let us discuss Bill 68, the Liberals and their House leader, with the involvement of the Minister of Financial Institutions and certainly with the approval of the Premier of the province of Ontario, moved motions forcing us to discuss closure.

All we have ever wanted to do is debate Bill 68 properly and try to impress these Liberal members with the fact that

thousands and thousands of people are going to be hurt really badly if Bill 68 is passed. That is all we have ever wanted to do. So I am not filibustering; nobody in the New Democratic Party is filibustering. We are trying to protect democracy. We are trying to protect long-time traditions in this parliamentary system. We are doing the very best we can.

0840

As I say, what makes us afraid is that, notwithstanding that we are doing the very best we can, it may not be enough because the Liberals have a majority that is arrogant and supercilious and that is prepared to snuff out democracy. People are calling 965-1224, people like Michael Northcott from Toronto. Michael Northcott calls to say that he has been voting Liberal all his life, but no more. Mike Northcott from Toronto says he will be voting New Democrat next election.

Paul Ivan Brochu, another Wellander, calls to say he is fed up with the corporate domination of this government. He is fed up with this government's forsaking the interests of the people of Ontario in favour of the interests of big, wealthy, powerful corporations. Mrs Benjamin from Rexdale calls because she knows that closure is wrong. She knows that this bill is too important not to be debated. I appreciate her calling. I know that everybody in the New Democratic Party appreciates the energy that people like Mrs Benjamin and Paul Ivan Brochu lend to the struggle that we are engaged in right now to defeat this time allocation motion.

People ask me what we hope to achieve by our opposition to this time allocation motion, which is as vigorous as it can possibly be by our official opposition. You know, Mr Speaker, part of me actually thought that the House leader for the Liberals would see the indecency of this motion. Part of me still has enough faith in some human qualities, and the fact that those human qualities should be universal and should be possessed by all people.

I hoped that if the Liberal House leader heard the arguments and, more important, heard from the thousands and thousands of people in Ontario who have been calling every day like the 500-plus who called in the last 12, 13, 14 hours, some of them waiting two or three hours before they finally got through two clogged phone lines, the Liberal House leader could break free from the domination of this auto insurance gang here in the province of Ontario long enough to say: "I'll withdraw the closure motion. I'll withdraw the time allocation motion so that Bill 68, the auto insurance legislation, this threshold legislation, this threshold insurance, can be debated, and there can be an exchange."

But we are some three or four weeks and some 40 hours and change later and the Liberal House leader has not withdrawn it. I am left with this then, because I will still welcome a note from the Liberal House leader, a note brought to me right now that says "Sit down," so that he can withdraw the motion. I will sit down if he is going to withdraw the motion so that we can start talking about Bill 68.

We could start talking about Bill 68 this very morning. We can start talking about Bill 68 right now because, once again, who is doing the filibustering? The Liberals are the obstructionists. They forced us to spend almost a month discussing a time allocation motion when we could have been spending that time debating Bill 68.

It has nothing to do with time. It has to do with the fact that the Premier of Ontario does not want to debate about Bill 68. Why? That is an interesting question. The Premier of Ontario knows, as the result of polls that have been done, that the vast

majority of Canadians thoroughly reject Bill 68 because they know that it is a threshold scheme; they know that it is going to raise premiums; they know that it is going to provide less protection, and they know that it is going to generate incredible taxpayer subsidies of the private corporate auto industry right here in Ontario.

So many people so thoroughly condemn Bill 68 that the Premier surely is not afraid that a debate about Bill 68 would develop more negative opinion about it in the community, because there is no more negative opinion to be developed. Other than the insurance industry and a few stragglers, there is nobody out there who supports Bill 68, is there?

The concern that clearly must be in the Premier's mind must be that if the Liberal backbenchers are exposed to an exchange, a debate about Bill 68, rather than the fluff that the Ministry of Financial Institutions and the insurance industry pumps out—I have a feeling that the Premier of Ontario is afraid that there may just be 29 Liberal backbenchers who want to keep their jobs and will vote against Bill 68. Because that will be the only way that they can keep their jobs come the next general election.

I tell you that, Mr Speaker, and that is why the Premier of Ontario—because he is calling the shots, no two ways about it. Ultimately, the Premier of Ontario is the one who is making the decisions. That is why the Premier of Ontario does not want debate on Bill 68.

When people say, "How can this not be a filibuster?"—

Mr B. Rae: The phones are still ringing off the hook.

Mr Kormos: Thank you. I appreciate that. That is phone number 965-1224 right here in Toronto, right here at Queen's Park. The member for York South has been back there answering the phone along with a whole bunch of other MPPs and staff.

Mrs Kirsh from Toronto calls to say that this Liberal government here at Queen's Park has taken a leaf out of Mulroney's book and is treating the taxpayers, the residents, the voters of Ontario with disdain.

Some people ask me, "How can this not be a filibuster?" I say, "Because we have rules." Again, Mr Speaker, with your guidance and your skill, you have helped me understand that in my short time here in this provincial Parliament. You have helped me understand that during the course of a debate one cannot merely read. In the traditional American filibuster, you could stand there and read the Bible from Genesis on. You could read Samuel Clemens. You could recite the alphabet. You could recite gibberish. But here in the parliamentary system we have rules that prohibit you from reading.

You can make reference to notes and you can make reference to written matter to which one is referring, but you cannot read. Two, you have to stay on point. I know that, Mr Speaker, I understand that. Three, you cannot be repetitive. Those are the basic rules and I understand them, with your help, and I know that over the months your guidance and your direction has been invaluable. I am sincerely thankful to you for that.

0850

Does Elaine Ziemba ring a bell? God bless her. Elaine Ziemba calls from High Park-Swansea to say she supports what is going on here. "Keep up the good work," she says to the opposition. We appreciate Elaine Ziemba calling in. Too bad the government will not listen to people like Elaine Ziemba. But then again, she is not a big auto insurance executive, is she?

You know the rules. You cannot be repetitive, you cannot read and you have to stay on topic. Right now we are not talking about Bill 68, and I know that. We are talking about this time allocation, this closure motion. That is what we are talking about right now. That is what we have been talking about since 3 April. The Liberals have made us talk about this since 3 April when it is far more important to be discussing Bill 68. But look at the lengths that the Liberals will go to to avoid a debate, a discussion, about Bill 68, about their threshold auto insurance scheme.

Cheryl Balsilli calls from London, Ontario. She phones in and leaves a message.

Interjection.

Mr Kormos: Thank you. More phone calls are coming in at 965-1224 or 965-1239.

Cheryl Balsilli from London calls. She asks that these Liberals make reference to the history of our country and the history of parliamentarism here in Canada. I think about Sir John A. Macdonald and I think about what they are doing to a tradition that is now over a century old and has involved the contribution of so many wonderful people.

Murray Erola from Welland calls to give the opposition his full support. Murray Erola calls from Welland, and Cathy Woots calls from Oshawa, Ontario. She says: "Look what's happened in eastern Europe. Even the communists knew enough to side with the people. What about the Liberals?"

People ask me how have I kept up what I am doing. People ask me that. They ask what kind of source material am I using. The hundreds, by now thousands, of phone calls that we have received here at Queen's Park have provided a strength and energy, a desire, a motivation that could come from no other source. That is number one.

The hundreds of letters from people across Ontario—once again, sure, lawyers sent me letters. Who better to help us understand what this legislation is all about? Sure, lawyers sent letters, but so did hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of other people from all walks of life. Senior citizens, young people, students, factory workers, nurses, physiotherapists, doctors, teachers and police officers sent letters condemning Bill 68 too.

They sent letters, many of them having been innocent injured victims of motor vehicle accidents. They sent letters knowing that if what happened to them would happen to them after the Liberals could force Bill 68 through this Legislature, there would not be compensation for them in the scheme that has been concocted by the Liberals and the auto insurance industry here in the province of Ontario.

You know what, Mr Speaker? I was present at three weeks plus of general government committee hearings. I was there at those hearings listening to the submissions that were made and reading the documentation filed. What source material am I using? The guidance, the advice, the direction provided by those same people who went to great effort to make submissions to those general government committee hearings. I read the material. I read material like the letter from Mr Justice Haines, retired judge of the Supreme Court.

I listened carefully to Mr Justice Barr, retired judge of the Supreme Court. I listened carefully to people like John Bates from PRIDE, People to Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere. I listened carefully to people like old Jock Shields from out in London way, one of the most experienced driver trainer instructors in the province of Ontario, if not in the whole country of Canada. I listened carefully to what these people had to say. The Minister of Financial Institutions was not there. He was not

there to hear these people. He was not there to receive their submissions. He was not there to ask them his very special questions. That is my source material, if you will.

I get notes like this from Randy Hines in Midland who asks, "Will the Premier come to Midland to a town hall meeting on Bill 68?" Well, Randy Hines, give the Premier a call. Lee Martin from North York calls and says: "This atrocity has to stop. The Liberals are in for a rude awakening." Lee Martin says, "Hang in there."

John Matheson of Barrie calls in this morning. It is five minutes to 9 am on Friday 27 April 1990 right now. We have been debating this since 3 April and for the last stretch since six o'clock last night, some 15 hours now. People have been phoning in for the last 15 hours, and people have been coming down here to Queen's Park to sit in the visitors' galleries for the last 15 hours. People were coming here at one in the morning and at two in the morning and three in the morning, and there were people who stayed here all night. John Matheson from Barrie said: "The Liberals are not standing up for the rights of Ontario." Obviously, the NDP must fill the vacuum.

I say to the government whip: Have your Premier call an election. Let's have an election about Bill 68. Let's do it right now. It is almost 9 am. It is just a couple of minutes shy of 9 am. Get the Premier in here. Let him stand up and announce an election is going to be called. Let the people of Ontario decide at the ballot box about Bill 68. What are those Liberals afraid of? That if they put it to a vote by the electorate they will have broken their promise to the insurance industry? The Premier has demonstrated no concern whatsoever about breaking promises that he has made to the public of Ontario, yet the Premier seems to be awfully beholden to the auto insurance industry, such that he is so fearful of what would happen in a general election that he would not dare call one on the issue of Bill 68 and threshold insurance. John Matheson from Barrie says there is a vacuum.

Colonel Ross Tandler says, "Thanks for trying to stop this time allocation motion." That is Colonel Ross Tandler. Ross Tandler calls and he says, "Thanks for trying to stop this time allocation motion."

0900

Mr Philip: A lot of long-distance calls, Peter.

Mr Kormos: We have more messages coming in. Ivan Boric from Sudbury says, "Fully behind the New Democrats." Beverley Josephson from Owen Sound: "Just left the Liberals royally and never coming back." Stanley Pasternak from Don Mills says what so many others have said during the course of these discussions, that the real tragedy—again, it is perhaps an unfair thing to say—would be that if any of the legislators involved should become victims, or their children or their families, the sense of responsibility would be overwhelming, the sense of grief would be overwhelming.

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I am reminded that it is nine o'clock in the morning at this point. I draw your attention again to sections 130(a) and (b), but specifically (a) of the standing orders which requires that the House or committee of the whole House have a full Hansard service for such meetings.

I would just say to the Speaker that it has been our thought and practice in the past that full Hansard for this House includes the translation services that are available, the microphone pickups that we have for individuals who have the floor at the time they are speaking, and also includes people who sit between the members on either side and take down remarks of interjections,

because in many cases those interjections are responded to by the member who is speaking and who has the one mike that is functioning at the time of the speech, and therefore records that. That is the full Hansard we have at this point.

Now I have understood, as we had this discussion earlier on, that during the night, because your office was not fully apprised of the nature of the government's motion that this extension was going to take place, it was not possible to have people here to provide that kind of full Hansard service we have come to expect under our system, which is so important to us now that we no longer have the backup tapes we used to have for all members' mikes, which used to be open at all times to pick up the interjections.

I would just ask the Speaker, if I might, if we could have some indication from him when we might expect to have the representatives of Hansard who sit here picking up the interjections, to give us the full flavour of this place, which would allow me then to give interjections that the member for Welland-Thorold could respond to, which there is no point in doing at this point because of rule 20(b) on the one hand, and on the other hand, the nature that it is not going to be on Hansard anyway, and it would look very confusing to have him respond to something that cannot be recorded.

I wonder if we could have from you, Mr Speaker, some indication when we might expect that kind of full Hansard service for the deliberations, as our standing orders provide.

The Speaker: We discussed this matter earlier. I still feel that the regular Hansard tapes are running and everything is recorded other than the out of order interjections. The people at the Hansard desk were allowed to go home quite late and they are expected back some time this morning, but I will certainly, because of the serious consideration of the member for Scarborough West and the great concern he has for this, look into it, and I will certainly report to him directly.

Mr Kormos: Do the Liberals understand the anguish their closure motion is creating for people all over Ontario?

Mr B. Rae: There are a lot more calls coming in. We really have a hard time keeping up with them, the 965-1224 number.

Mr Kormos: It is 965-1224. We are prepared to talk to these folks.

Ms Guyatt—Mr Speaker, listen to this—from Ancaster, called in tears, in anguish. She has been watching this debate. She is an accident victim. Ms Guyatt, in tears, explains that—our phones behind us here at 965-1239—the pain and the disruption her injuries cause is indescribable, but that she knows that under Bill 68 she would receive no compensation for them. If the Liberals' insurance scheme becomes law, if it is permitted to be rammed through, Ms Guyatt, with her pain and suffering and anguish and family disruption, would not receive a penny in compensation for pain and suffering.

Mr Speaker, I move adjournment of the House, please.

0938

The House divided on Mr Kormos's motion, which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 10; nays 30.

Mr Kormos: We are talking about something, and have been for some time now, that is vitally important to people across Ontario. There are no two ways about it. Every new person you talk to, every new person you meet, every new city, town or village you travel to, every new letter you read and every new telephone call you receive persuades you, all that

much more so, that what we are talking about is vitally important to the future of every one of us here in the province of Ontario. If anybody doubts that, he ought to do some listening, he ought to do some reading, he ought to do some hearing and he ought to do some travelling around the province.

I will say it once again: The lawyers in Ontario are opposed to Bill 68. Sure they are, especially the personal injury lawyers who understand what it will mean for at least 95 per cent of all innocent injured accident victims to be disentitled to any compensation for pain and suffering or for loss of enjoyment of life.

I told members last night about the responses the Minister of Financial Institutions was making to petitioners here in this assembly and the impression that same minister and his Premier would try to create, that the threshold in Bill 68 is simply going to exclude the modest or trivial or minor injuries. It will. The threshold will exclude those modest, trivial scratches and bruises that heal up in a matter of days. They will be excluded by the threshold, and what that means is that the innocent victim who suffers minor scratches and bruises will not be entitled to receive compensation for the pain and suffering or the loss of enjoyment of life that he experiences.

The brief injury, the sprained wrist, the sprained ankle, will not pass the threshold either, and the innocent injured victim who suffers the sprained wrist or sprained ankle will not be entitled to any compensation for his pain or suffering. The victim with the broken back similarly will not be entitled to any compensation for pain and suffering, and that is not just, that is not fair, because that is not a trivial, a modest or a minor injury. Broken arms, broken legs, fractured skulls, fractured ribs will not pass the threshold either.

The reason I thought it so important for us to speak about the minister's response to petitioners was because the minister's response illustrates how this government, the Liberals at Queen's Park, the Liberals in Ontario—and there are defections en masse from the Liberal Party in Ontario, and not just by lawyers. Oh yes, lawyers are abandoning the Liberal Party, because lawyers, who understand the law and understand the rights and needs of innocent injured victims, know that the Liberals in Ontario are deserting those same innocent injured victims and forsaking those same innocent injured victims in favour of the profits, and big profits they are going to be for the private, corporate automobile insurance industry in this province.

Psychological injuries regardless of the severity will not be compensated by the Liberals' Bill 68. Why? Because the insurance industry wants it that way. That is where in the first year alone the insurance industry is going to generate \$823 million in brand-new profits, profits that it has never dared dream of before, profits that are being handed to it on a platter by the Liberals at Queen's Park, the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Financial Institutions.

That is why Ian Richmond calls us from Woodbridge, to ask this: "Will the government answer the phone when the taxpayers call with insurance claims," insurance claims that insurance companies simply are going to refuse to pay out because we know that—there are the phones ringing; they have been ringing since six o'clock last night and they were ringing on all the previous days that we were talking about this in the Legislature. Those phones have been ringing since six o'clock last night. That is almost 16 hours now. Two single telephone lines have enabled us to receive over 500 phone calls from people across Ontario. That is why Ian Richmond phones in from Woodbridge. He says, "Is the government going to answer the phone when taxpayers call with insurance claims?" Ian

Richmond knows that the insurance industry is still going to have short arms and deep pockets once Bill 68 is passed. The pockets are going to be even deeper and the arms are going to be even shorter. The leopard has not changed its spots.

I received a message this morning which said:

"Dear Pete:

Congratulations on the tremendous job that the New Democrats are doing in exposing to the public the massive con job the Ontario Liberal government is perpetrating on the people of this province with Bill 68 and its auto insurance legislation. The insurance companies, though their control of the auto insurance system, got the Ontario motorists into the expensive mess that we have been experiencing. Now the Ontario government proposes to give them almost total power in deciding the settlements by taking away the right of motorists to dispute them."

The threshold: That is what Bill 68 is all about. The author of this letter says that that is what is going to happen. "This auto insurance legislation will not solve the problem of high rates and inadequate settlements." We know that and we have had to say that time and time again because—the Minister of Financial Institutions, he loves to talk about an average of eight per cent across the province. But then, at the same time, he is compelled to announce to the press that drivers in Ontario are going to face premium increases of as much as 50 per cent once Bill 68 is passed.

We learned just two weeks ago that almost a third of a million drivers right here in the province of Ontario are going to face premium increases of up to 80 per cent after Bill 68 is rammed through this Legislature by these Liberals and the auto insurance industry that is pulling their strings.

The author of this letter says that this auto insurance legislation, the Liberals' Bill 68, the Liberal's threshold system, "will not solve the problem of high rates and inadequate settlements." It will, in fact, make the situation much worse. Oh yes, Bill 68 will make the situation much worse.

Not for the auto insurance industry. Those guys are as happy as pigs in a barnyard. The auto insurance industry is anticipating profits that it never dared dream of. The Liberals at Queen's Park are giving the industry, the auto insurance industry, more than that industry itself even dared ask for in 1987 when it appeared in front of the Coulter Osborne inquiry.

Yes, as the author of this letter indicates, it will make the situation much worse. "We all know," the author says, "the Liberals used a ploy before the 1987 election campaign. A ploy called rate review. The Premier of Ontario said it would reduce rates. But what happened?" Because that question was just posed. What happened during the period of so-called freezes? Premiums continued to go up and up and up. Even caps. It did not take long for the auto insurance industry to realize how simple it was going to be to penetrate the ineffective, and I say purposely ineffective, guidelines established by the Minister of Financial Institutions: loopholes so big you could drive a Mack truck through them.

It did not take long before insurance companies right here in the province of Ontario—and they are still doing it now—were doing the premium shuffle. Remember that, the premium flip? Insurance company A would drop you, insurance company B would pick you up and you would be looking at 25, 30, 35 per cent premium increases. That is far in excess of the 7.6 so-called—the most recent cap that the Minister of Financial Institutions claims that he has imposed on the insurance industry. Why, that cap is being avoided every day of the week.

A remarkable thing that people were discovering is that insurance company A that dropped them and insurance company B that picked them up for 25, 30, 35 per cent more premium increases, they had the same treasurer, same president, same address, same board of directors, same shareholders. It is called the premium shuffle, the premium flip.

"The Premier of Ontario said that rate review would reduce rates but we all know that they have gone up and up and up." That is what the author of this letter to me says. Now we are facing another provincial election—and we are—and the Liberals are using another ploy: their so-called no-fault insurance. Assuredly it will fail even more dismally than the first ploy did. But it is an awful price that motorists—yes, motorists—and, more sadly, victims, are going to have to pay. It is an awful price that drivers and taxpayers and victims are going to have to pay.

The price that they are going to pay is the price that the Liberal government is exacting from them, is seizing from them, so that the Liberal government can feverishly attempt to stay in power. "The motives of the Liberal government should be obvious," said the author of—

0950

More phone calls are coming into my office upstairs. I appreciate the staff bringing them down.

The author of this letter goes on: "The motives of the Liberal government should be obvious. Instead of using the most successful models of automobile insurance in the world, the public, driver-owned, non-profit plans of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, the Ontario government and Ontario's Liberals are caving in to the private insurers."

Let's remember that neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives nor the Social Credit, when in power in those western provinces, has ever even dared to mention the abolition of these public auto insurance systems, because they know that the voters in those provinces simply would not stand for it. The plans are just too good. Yes, in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and indeed British Columbia the plans are simply too good. This province's own studies indicate that those western systems are simply more efficient. They spend far less money on overhead. Indeed, the elimination of profit saves drivers in those provinces millions and millions of dollars a year.

The writer of this letter says, "The Liberals won't go for it here, not because it isn't the best system but because the Liberals in Ontario are entrenched too deeply in the boardrooms of that corporate auto insurance industry."

The author of this letter to me today says, "The motorists here in the province of Ontario, the drivers, and more so the drivers and the taxpayers and the innocent injured victims of Ontario, are going to have a second layer of their hides ripped off."

The author of this letter then flatters me by speaking of me having performed an outstanding service. I say no. I say we in the opposition have done our job as best we could to fight what is simply bad legislation, to fight legislation that will betray the people of Ontario, the drivers, the taxpayers and the victims, in favour of massive, obscene and unconscionable profits for an already powerful and wealthy auto insurance industry right here in the province of Ontario.

The author of this letter flatters me, but as I say to you, Mr Speaker, and to him, that it is the New Democrats in opposition, performing their role as opposition members, notwithstanding the efforts of the Liberals at Queen's Park to snuff out any opposition, to muzzle the opposition, to strangle the opposition,

to guillotine it; oh yes, to silence it, to muzzle it through its time allocation, through its closure motion, through its very Brian Mulroney tactics. The author of this letter says, "May they remember you and the NDP for it."

I suspect, Mr Speaker, that you recognize some of the language. That came today from a good friend to the drivers, taxpayers and victims of Ontario. That came from Mel Swart in Thorold. I tell you, Mr Speaker, that Mel Swart advanced the interests of motorists, victims and drivers for 13 years in this Legislative Assembly. He worked too hard and too selflessly for us to let Liberal jackboots destroy the heritage he has left behind.

Mr Speaker, I suppose I do not have to tell you once again that we are opposed to this time allocation motion. I suppose at this point it would be somewhat redundant for me to tell you that we find this closure motion of the Liberals the most distasteful, undemocratic process that could ever be imagined. We find it distasteful when Brian Mulroney and the Conservatives use it to implement the goods and services tax on Parliament Hill, and we find it obscene and repugnant when the Liberals use closure here at Queen's Park to advance a bit of legislation as unpopular, as dangerous and as ill-advised as the GST is for this country. Do you want to know something, Mr Speaker? You have heard so many of the letters, so many of the telephone calls we have received that have made that very same connection. It is not a mysterious one; it is a very logical one for people across this province.

I will tell you why Stu Ellis phones in from St Catharines with respect for what the opposition is doing. We appreciate his taking the time to telephone. He is a lawyer. Lawyers like Stu Ellis, lawyers like Herman Turkstra, lawyers like the personal injury bar in cities and towns across Ontario, lawyers in the plaintiffs' bar in this province are what makes sure that innocent victims receive what is rightly theirs by way of compensation. I have no doubt that a greedy insurance industry would love to see the role of lawyers diminished to the point where they are mere signatories to letters, and that is a most dangerous proposal.

Do you want to know something, Mr Speaker? From one very valid perspective, this legislation is not about insurance at all. This legislation is about telling victims of all ilks that they are not going to be entitled to use a courtroom to enforce a remedy against a negligent perpetrator who is almost inevitably more powerful than they are, wealthier than they are and more persuasive, and, when we see this government, we see the friends this government has made, a party that is more politically connected than they are.

There is a myth that has been generated to the effect that somehow lawyers—and lawyers have been in opposition to this legislation. Do I have to go through the lists, the names and the organizations, the teachers of Ontario, the police officers of Ontario, the firefighters of Ontario, the trade unionists of Ontario, the craft union members, the doctors, the nurses, the physiotherapists? Do I have to go through that complete list again of all those people in Ontario who indeed oppose this legislation?

In fact, those same people know that this legislation is going to create misery for drivers because of the high premiums and the premium increases. It is going to create misery for taxpayers because this legislation means a taxpayer subsidy of a private corporate auto insurance industry to the tune of some \$143 million in the first year alone.

Let's talk about the misery for victims. Let's talk about the pain and suffering and the loss of enjoyment of life of innocent

injured victims. Pain, pain, pain that cannot be quashed by narcotics; pain that cannot be soothed by physiotherapy; and loss of enjoyment of life that is almost immeasurable. For 95 per cent of those people there will be not a penny in compensation for pain and suffering or not a penny in compensation for their loss of enjoyment of life. I say to you, Mr Speaker, is there a fair-minded person anywhere in the province of Ontario who finds that acceptable?

We are talking about the innocent injured victims. We are talking about the opportunity to debate this issue, because for four and a half weeks now, the government of Ontario has fled from any debate on Bill 68.

I tell you, Mr Speaker, Ms McKay's grade 1 class in Hamilton—grade 1 kids, Mr Speaker—phoned in this morning, thanking the opposition in this Legislature for making Canada a better place. I tell you this, Mr Speaker, if grade 1 kids know that, why do not Liberal cabinet ministers? If grade 1 kids know that, why do not Liberal cabinet ministers?

That is why Julie Andrews calls from Toronto and says, "Keep it up." She says to the opposition, "Keep it up."

That is why Joanne Robinson called from Mississauga at 9:40 this morning and said, "Keep right on going and push, push, push."

The people out there are mad. They are mad about what this government is doing to democracy here in the province of Ontario. They are mad about what this government is doing to drivers, to taxpayers, yes, and innocent injured victims.

People like Nick and Theresa Albano from 136 Walts Street in Welland. I know these folks, Mr Speaker. These people are not lawyers. These people are hardworking people who worked hard to make a better life for their children than they had themselves, and Nick and Theresa Albano write:

"Dear Pete:

"Keep right on talking and fighting against Bill 68. We think that Bill 68 should be put out to pasture along with the Liberals."

An hon member: Can I call you Pete?

Mr Kormos: You can call me Pete.

You see, we are not afraid to listen to people like Nick and Theresa Albano. We are not afraid to listen and talk to people like Joanne Robinson and Julie Andrews and Tammy Cardwell from Hamilton, and Pat Pepin from Hamilton and Carol Garbutt from Hamilton and Alison Dehun from Hamilton and Joan Cureton from Hamilton and Randy Divinczo from Hamilton and Pamela Lindeman from Hamilton and Lorne Baxton from Weston. We are not afraid to talk to these people, and when these people call New Democrats, when they telephone New Democrats, we talk to them. You do not have to be an insurance company executive to get put through when you call the New Democrat at Queen's Park.

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I just thought I would mention that there are more people watching from the gallery today than there are members in the House and I think we should have a quorum call.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1004

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and through you I say thanks to Joan Douglas from Scarborough, I say thanks to Lise Sawa from Etobicoke, I say thanks to James Papple from St George, and I say thanks to the Hansard people for doing outstanding work under less-than-ideal conditions.

I got a call from Pat Gibson in Prescott, Ontario. It came into our offices at 9:55 this morning. Pat Gibson's wife and daughter were killed in a head-on collision in Hemmingford, Quebec, on 26 August 1989. An oncoming car had crossed the centre lane. Two granddaughters, nine years old and four years old, survived, but they were badly hurt. I tell you, it is not difficult to understand that Pat Gibson and his family have gone through hell; a pain that is indescribable. Pat Gibson from Prescott, Ontario, knows what a no-fault system does to victims.

I tell you this, Mr Speaker, Pat Gibson, whose wife and daughter were killed in Hemmingford, Quebec, and his two grandchildren, aged four and nine, were badly hurt, Pat Gibson has this to say about the Liberals and their no-fault proposal. Pat Gibson says if the Liberals go ahead with Bill 68, they should be tarred, feathered and run out of town on a rail. He adds, "You know where I am coming from."

Yes, because Pat Gibson, you see, was a victim twice. Pat Gibson was a victim of the drunk or the careless or the reckless driver who crossed that centre line, not giving a tinker's damn, and smashed head-on into his car, smashing the life out of his wife, smashing the life out of his daughter and breaking the bones of his two grandchildren.

Yes, I know where Pat Gibson is coming from. He was an innocent victim. Pat Gibson from Prescott, Ontario, knows all about no-fault. I know where Pat Gibson is coming from.

Theresa Novielli from Woodbridge: I tell you where she is coming from. She is saying no to Bill 68 and she is saying no to time allocation. She is saying, "Why do the Liberals flee from debate?"

Why were the Liberals prepared to spend four weeks discussing time allocation? We have been here since 3 April. Why have the Liberals of Ontario been prepared to debate time allocation, a closure motion, for four weeks, for what I tell you now is almost 40 hours, when they want to spend two two-and-a-half-hour afternoons discussing Bill 68 in committee of the whole and one further afternoon for its third and final reading? There is something perversely wrong. There is something perversely wrong with that.

Am I not articulating what has happened since 3 April? Look at what has happened. All we in the New Democratic Party have ever wanted to do was to debate Bill 68, to have an opportunity to ask the minister about its provisions and about its clauses and about its terms and about its impact on people, on drivers and taxpayers and victims.

We never had that chance during the general government hearings, did we, Mr Speaker? We were denied that chance, because the Minister of Financial Institutions was a no-show. The Minister of Financial Institutions was a no-show in Ottawa, he was a no-show in Sudbury, he was a no-show in Thunder Bay and he was a no-show in Windsor, and he was a no-show on each and every day that participants came to Queen's Park to make submissions to that general government committee about how bad Bill 68 was and just how many people it was going to hurt across the province of Ontario. He was a no-show. He was a no-show, Mr Speaker; he was a no-show.

You see, Mr Speaker, all we wanted to do was debate Bill 68. That was all we wanted to do.

1010

Mr Philip: Peter, Mr Silva wants to know if the Liberals are going to cancel elections next.

Mr Kormos: That is why Carlo Silva calls from Toronto and says: "What's next? Is there going to be a bill to cancel elections?"

John Greco calls up and he says: "Keep it up. I'm not a lawyer, I'm just a driver and a taxpayer."

A. C. MacLean from Hornepayne and A. S. Fenson say in their telephone messages this morning, just moments ago, right here at Queen's Park, that they are not going to forget this at election time.

Kim Visser says, "Right on." She is from Oshawa. I know some Vissers; we have got some Vissers who live down in Welland and Thorold, where I come from. Kim Visser phones in from Oshawa and says, "Right on." She says, "People like the New Democrats give us hope."

I tell you, we in the New Democratic Party do not take kindly to closure motions. We do not take kindly to a government that would use its jackboots to stamp out democracy here at Queen's Park.

We hear this morning from Lisa Kertesz from Mississauga. Lisa Kertesz phoned, and she is mad. She just told our people answering the phones that she is mad. She called last night to support us, and indeed, yes, this is the second time I have read a message from Lisa Kertesz.

But on CHFI radio this morning, the Liberals are claiming that these messages are fake. The Liberals are claiming that these messages, over 500 of them in the last 12, 13, 14 hours are fake.

I tell you, Mr Speaker, these are very real people, and it is nothing short of asinine for any Liberal to suggest that these people are fake. I tell you, these are very real people. I tell you, Pat Gibson in Prescott, Ontario; his wife and daughter are dead. Is some Liberal going to stand up and say Pat Gibson is a fake? Maybe it was a fake death, and fake injuries to his two granddaughters. What a horrid thing to do.

Lisa Kertesz from Mississauga is not a fake.

I want to tell you, a whole lot of people understand what is happening here in light of what is happening at Parliament Hill right now. A whole lot of people understand that. A whole lot of people understand that the Conservatives, Brian Mulroney's Conservatives, made closure something of an art form, if you will. I mean, it got to the point where the Conservatives up on Parliament Hill were not thinking twice about imposing closure on debate, about guillotining debate, about cutting it off, about severing its head. And their clones here at Queen's Park picked up the habit awful fast, to the point where this time allocation motion was introduced after there were but the introductory remarks about Bill 68 in what we hoped would be a meaningful and productive committee of the whole discussion.

I have got a letter dated 27 April 1990. It says:

"Dear Peter:

"On behalf of the federal caucus, I want to express a few words of support and congratulations for your valiant effort to put a stop to Peterson's Liberals and their arrogant attitude towards the people of Ontario."

This letter is from the House of Commons in Ottawa.

"All of us here know what it takes to mount a filibuster, as you are doing, and we want you to know that your efforts are not going unnoticed. As New Democrats and as fellow politicians, we are proud of your fight and we wish you continued success. Congratulations and keep it up."

It is signed by Dawn Black, the caucus vice-chairperson of the New Democratic Party caucus at Parliament Hill.

Mr Speaker, do you know why it is important to mention this to these people right here? The New Democrats in Ottawa know what closure is all about. They know what it means to have an opposition's life strangled out of it. They know that. They know what it means to have jackboots trampling par-

liamentary tradition, the jackboots of an arrogant and supercilious majority, be it the Tories, be it the Conservatives, be it Brian Mulroney and Mike Wilson on Parliament Hill or be it the Premier of Ontario and his Minister of Financial Institutions and the siblings grim, his House leader and whip, right here at Queen's Park. And I tell you, we New Democrats at Queen's Park will no more tolerate jackbootism from an arrogant majority government than will New Democrats on Parliament Hill tolerate it from the Conservative Party there.

Lola McGhee calls from Oshawa. She has been watching for three weeks.

Gary Godfrey from Guelph, Ontario, believes that Bill 68 is an unconstitutional law, and I tell you, Gary Godfrey is among good company, because some leading constitutional experts right here in the province of Ontario have warned this government that its threshold provision contained in Bill 68 may well be unconstitutional.

Indeed—catch this, Mr Speaker—the counsel for the Insurance Bureau of Canada has himself conceded that there—This is the counsel for the insurance lobby; this is the group of wealthy and powerful insurance companies that want Bill 68 passed very badly. The Insurance Bureau of Canada's own counsel has conceded that there is a possibility—I appreciate “possibility” ain't strong language, is it?—that the threshold provisions of Bill 68—those are provisions that are going to exclude over 95 per cent of all innocent injured accident victims from any compensation for pain and suffering; those are the provisions that guarantee that psychological injuries will not be considered for compensation because there ain't no threshold because they are excluded from being compensable.

That is why Joan Robertson from Mississauga called in just moments ago. She says, “If we're fake,” if people like her are fake, as some Liberals have been trying to persuade the media, then those same people like Joan Robertson should not have to pay their Ontario taxes.

I tell you, Mr Speaker, over 500 phone calls in the last 12, 13, 14 hours, and I tell you, the telephones have rung steadily. Now not only are the two phones down here, 965-1224 and 965-1239, not only are those two phones ringing steadily, but my legislative phones upstairs in my office are ringing as well.

1020

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I call your attention to standing order 20(a), (b) and (c) and to some traditions of this House that have been noted by other speakers who are not perhaps as tired as you are at this moment. I have been finding it a little difficult to hear the member for Welland-Thorold's beginning remarks to the House because of so many private conversations being held on the other side. I wonder if you would not perhaps keep your ear tuned to those kinds of things so that all people in the House will be able to hear these early remarks of the member for Welland-Thorold.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for bringing that to my attention. Under the circumstances, since I have taken the chair in the last few minutes, I do not think it has been exceptionally unruly, but I will be most vigilant.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Vigilance is what I am after, Mr Speaker; that is all.

Mr Kormos: Mark Wier from the Lakeshore and six other people he is calling for this morning appreciate what the official opposition is doing here at Queen's Park. That is why Bill Cain from Rexdale phones in this morning to say, “Keep up the good work in the opposition here at Queen's Park.” That is why

Gerald Tobin from Bolton calls in this morning at 9:55 right here to Queen's Park and says, “Keep up the good work.” He talks about the insurance scandal and the environmental fiasco.

Listen, Mr Speaker, we are talking about a government that is plagued, with an insurance scandal, an environmental fiasco, a developers' disgrace, a housing debacle and scandalous new taxes, all broken promises that brought it to power. You know what broken promises mean. Gerald Tobin from Bolton says, “Go ahead, Premier, call an election.”

George and Betty Burdick are mad that there are Liberal members in this assembly who have so much thorough disdain for the voters and taxpayers of Ontario. George and Betty Burdick from Parry Sound said, “We're for real.” George and Betty Burdick are real people who cast real ballots at election time. They, just like Gerald Tobin, say, “Go ahead, Premier, call an election.”

What gives, Mr Speaker? What gives here? What is going on? The Premier will not permit a debate about Bill 68. The Premier will not call an election. More than a few people have suggested that next in line is for the Premier to simply lock the doors. The Premier wants to muzzle the opposition. The Premier wants to stomp all over parliamentary tradition. Maybe the next thing that is going to happen is that the Premier is just going to lock the doors, because you know what happened last night.

For a little while last night there were some government members who were trying to create the impression that the public was not going to be allowed in this, their building. The impression, Mr Speaker—we received phone calls about people expressing concern—and I tell you there is a person sitting right up there in that gallery who has been there since at least midnight, who very much understood the commentary to be to that effect.

You remember what happened. You remember what was said. In the first instance, the public galleries were not going to be made available to people who wanted to come into their building. This is their building. This building belongs to the people of Ontario. It does not belong to the Liberal Party and it does not belong to the Premier and it does not belong to the Minister of Financial Institutions or the House leader, and least of all does it belong to the auto insurance industry in the province of Ontario. But I tell you, you would be hard-pressed to know that from what you have heard Liberals say right here in this assembly and from what you have seen Liberals do right here at Queen's Park. You would be hard pressed to know that.

That is why Rob from London, Ontario, calls up. He wants to see an election called on Bill 68. You know what, Mr Speaker? Why does the Premier not call an election? Rob from London, like a whole bunch of other good people who have been paying attention to what is going on, says: “Call an election. Let the people of Ontario judge Bill 68.”

Dianne Parsons calls up this morning. She lives here in Toronto. She says she is going to try to come down. We made noise last night when there was an effort to create an impression that these public galleries were not going to be accessible to the public, to the good people who took the time, effort and energy to come down to Queen's Park to see what was happening. Dianne Parsons wants to come down, and I say to Dianne Parsons, “Come on down,” because the Liberals have not won this closure motion yet. This closure motion is not just against the opposition; this closure motion is against the people of Ontario. This is a closure against the voters, against the taxpayers, against the drivers, against the victims in Ontario. That is what this closure motion is all about.

That is why Barry Hemphill from Owen Sound calls in. He has been trying since last night to get through on the phones. He tells us in the opposition that we are doing what his Liberal member will not do, standing up for people's rights. I tell you once again, as I have said so many times before, Mr Speaker, we in the New Democratic Party are not beholden to the auto insurance industry. There are no two ways about it. We do not owe the auto insurance industry a thing.

We have never been the beneficiaries of its generosity. We have never received the big campaign contributions, not even the little campaign contributions, from the auto insurance industry that the Liberals in Ontario have been the beneficiaries of. I am talking about campaign contributions in the last general election in excess of \$100,000, campaign contributions by the auto insurance industry to Liberals in Ontario. We are not beholden to the auto insurance industry. We are not beholden to the Patti Starrs. We did not receive any charitable money and we do not expect any, because we do not run things that way.

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Although I notice that the Sergeant at Arms has returned to the House and although he is presently in the precincts, I would draw to your attention that for many hours last night the Sergeant at Arms was not present and therefore the sword and symbol of the power of the Sergeant at Arms to maintain order was not here in the House during that period of time.

I draw your attention to several things that I would like to point out. One would be section 139 of the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly. The other would be pages 104 through 105 of Erskine May and page 61 of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms in terms of the role and importance of the Sergeant at Arms to the House. Although we have had the mace as a symbol of power, a separation of the officers here, we did not have the Sergeant at Arms here when there could have been difficulties at one time or another during the evening between certain members.

1030

I would note that section 139 of our standing orders indicates as follows: "In case of the absence of the Sergeant at Arms, his or her duties shall be performed by any other person appointed by the Speaker." I was wondering if the Speaker, on that part, might tell us just who it was who was appointed in the time that the Sergeant at Arms had to be away for important personal reasons last night. Who was appointed during that period to maintain the order in the House at that time? The House was not apprised of the fact that any decision had been made. I was not aware that had taken place.

You will notice on pages 104 and 105 of Erskine May, Mr Speaker, that the Sergeant at Arms has many important responsibilities which require his authority to administer and the reason for which he carries a sword and is the one person in this House who is allowed to bear arms in this area. I would note as well his control over the arrangements for visitors to the gallery, which was a problem earlier on last night when he was still here, and other kinds of matters in terms of the openness of this facility were not maintained, as far as I am aware. I would like to know what arrangements were made for an interim Sergeant during that period of time.

The Acting Speaker: I, of course, would like to thank the honourable member for Scarborough West for bringing that very important item to my attention. Interestingly enough I was here last night, and you know what? I was in the chair. The Sergeant at Arms approached me and indicated some difficul-

ties that he would be having and suggested that he would be absent. He had made arrangements with me to ensure that the symbol would remain the precinct and his authority was assigned to the Clerk Assistant—I am not sure exactly what the title is—"attendant" and from the first attendant to the second attendant.

I felt comfortable that was authority enough for him to let me know what the process would be. I might have been remiss in advising the House that was taking place. That being the case, I apologize. I am sure the House would forgive me in my humble remiss, but all things considered, I think the procedure was in order.

Mr R. F. Johnston: I figure it would be absolutely inappropriate for me to accept an apology in that there is no requirement for you to do it. I think it was incumbent upon me as a member to raise the issue with you. It sounds to me, as I might have understood you would have done, that you followed all the procedures that we might have expected and appointed an appropriate replacement, and I thank you for so doing.

The Acting Speaker: I, of course, thank the honourable member for Scarborough West. We will continue on now with—just refresh my memory in case I forgot—orders of the day, item 51, resuming the adjourned debate on government notice of motion 30 on time allocation in relation to Bill 68, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance.

Mr Kormos: Stan Miscus calls on behalf of his grandfather, Paul Cook of Port Colborne. Paul Cook would have liked to have called and Stan Miscus knows that, but Paul Cook died in an accident six months ago. Now Stan Miscus knows what it is like to deal with an insurance company, owe an insurance company, that has short arms and deep pockets, an insurance company that is all about making profits, an insurance company that will make profits by charging the maximum amount of premiums but paying out the least amount of compensation. So Stan Miscus knows that his grandfather, Paul Cook, would have wanted to call.

Hector Beuparlant calls from Welland. He is a school principal. He is a leading member of the francophone community in the city of Welland, a member of a large family, all of whom have a wonderful spirit and joy for life and a passion for their community. I am proud to tell you, Mr Speaker, that Hector Beuparlant is a friend of mine. I am proud to tell you that Hector Beuparlant is not just a great Canadian as an educator and as someone who has provided leadership in his francophone community, but also, as I say, somebody who has retained some significant and solid values for himself and for his family. So I am so pleased to be able to tell you that Hector Beuparlant—Hansard knew how to spell that. Beuparlant was secondhand to them; they knew how to spell that.

Ron Dix calls from St Catharines. He says he is misrepresented by his member from Brock.

Susan Dorsey from North York calls because she wants the Liberals to know that she is a real person and that she can vote and that she will.

Walter A. Blunt calls because he finds common sense and decency lacking in the Liberal Party.

Armando Alas from Scarborough calls up with appreciation for the defence of the rights of the people of Ontario.

Carol Coffee and family of Newmarket say to keep it up.

An anonymous insurance company employee called in just five minutes ago at 10:30. All the insurance adjusters that she knows are against Bill 68. They fear for their jobs if they express their views openly. She says to keep it up.

A government employee who called last night is still watching, would prefer with good reason not to give his or her name, but calls and says keep it up.

Jim McGraw calls. He says insurance companies are bandits. You want to know something, Mr Speaker? He knows, because he and his fiancée were involved in a motor vehicle accident in 1987. His fiancée, like so many others, was arbitrarily and unfairly and cruelly cut off for so-called no-fault benefits. We appreciate people like Jim McGraw calling.

Jonathan Neville calls to say, one, Bill 68 is bad; two, the Liberal government is turning into a dictatorship; three, the Premier of Ontario is becoming so indistinguishable from Brian Mulroney, the Prime Minister of Canada. They use the same tactics. They have the same style. They appear to have the same agendas.

Mrs Michaud calls from St Catharines at 10:26 this morning and says thank God that we are fighting for the little guy.

Madeleine, Peter and Brian Jockpoint from North Bay, Ontario, say: "Bill 68 is a mess. Keep fighting time allocation." They say, "We're not fakes." Madeleine and Peter and Brian, well, they are real people. You want to know something? They are real people who are going to cast real ballots in the next general election. When are we going to get this through the Liberal members' thick heads? Drivers can vote, insurance companies cannot. You know what we are looking for, Mr Speaker. All we need are 29 Liberal backbenchers to vote against Bill 68, all we need are 29 Liberal backbenchers to vote against time allocation, and it can be defeated.

1040

We have received hundreds and hundreds and hundreds—I do not know whether it was 600—expressions of support. Mr Robert Dickey and his wife Dinah have Liberal membership card numbers 778968 and 761541. Robert Dickey from Toronto called us just moments ago to explain that he and his wife both are quitting the Liberal Party of Ontario because of their party's unprincipled stance on Bill 68.

I tell you, Mr Speaker, there is an exodus from the Liberal Party. People like Robert Dickey and Dinah Dickey—and I know that it is very difficult for them, because I will bet you they have been Liberals for more than just a couple of months or a couple of years. I bet you they have been involved in election campaigns, I bet you they have supported Liberal candidates financially, I bet you they have gone to Liberal conventions and I bet you Robert and Dinah Dickey thought that they would have some influence over the policies of the Liberal Party in Ontario.

I bet you Robert Dickey and Dinah Dickey are about as fine a pair of people you are ever going to find anywhere, who care about their community, who care about their province, who care about their country and who will go that extra mile, who become activists, who join a political party because they feel that that political party embraces their vision of what this province or what this country ought to be.

There may well have been a time in the history of the Liberal Party in Ontario when the Liberal Party represented the views of its membership, when the Liberal Party represented the aspirations of those men and women like Robert Dickey and Dinah Dickey who would buy memberships and be activists. But now this very same Liberal Party in Ontario has demonstrated that its interests are those of the wealthy, powerful auto insurance industry here in the province of Ontario.

It is a very painful thing, I am sure, for Robert Dickey and Dinah Dickey to sever their ties with a party that I am sure they

felt a great deal of commitment to. I can say with confidence that it is a painful thing and something that was arrived at not without a great deal of thought on their part. But this party has abandoned its membership, and Robert and Dinah Dickey are not alone. Liberals across Ontario have been fleeing from the Liberal Party, have been tearing up and cutting up and discarding their Liberal membership cards. Grassroots people like the Dickeyes and executive members and leading Liberals and leading Liberal activists and leading Liberal financiers have been abandoning the Liberal Party. Herman Turkstra from Hamilton, a member of the executive, and you will recall Barry Edson of Downsview, again a member of executive in the Liberal Party, active campaigner in the Minister of Health's campaign, active campaigner in the campaign of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology.

We are talking about Liberals here who, when they call the Premier's office, once again, the Premier's office staff know who they are. We are talking about people who have been in the inner circle. You know about that. You know how that works. These people too, are fleeing the Liberal Party of Ontario because the Liberal Party of Ontario has sold out the workers, seniors, young people, single mothers, farm workers, farmers, small business people. It has sold them out in favour of a corporate auto insurance structure, a corporate auto insurance industry that is oh so powerful and, yes, oh so wealthy.

One of the organizations that opposed Bill 68 and opposed it articulately and intelligently and capably, opposed it after a great deal of analysis, a great deal of thought, a great deal of study, was ARCH, the Advocacy Resource Centre for the Handicapped.

I have a letter here dated 27 April from the executive director of ARCH. It is addressed to me and I am going to share it with members because it is important in the consideration of this time allocation motion. It reads:

"Dear Mr Kormos:

"On behalf of people who unbeknownst to them will soon become disabled as a result of auto accidents in Ontario, ARCH would like to thank you and the NDP for bringing the disability giveaway of the government's Ontario motorist protection plan"—that is what the Liberals dared to call this—"to the attention of the public.

"It has been troubling to hear representatives of the government characterize opposition to Bill 68 as coming from self-interested lawyers. ARCH's concerns about the bill have nothing whatsoever to do with the interests of lawyers.

"The fact of the matter is that the government has chosen to solve the province's insurance problems by cutting compensation to persons who are injured in accidents." This government has chosen to take a course of action which will result in cutting compensation to people injured in accidents. "ARCH believes it is unconscionable that the benefits payable under Bill 68 are not indexed"—are not indexed, are not indexed—"against inflation. We are not aware of schemes which deal so harshly with persons whose needs remain constant over a lifetime, but whose ability to meet those needs erodes gradually but inevitably with passage of time.

"We also believe that the threshold used to limit the right to sue is arbitrary and discriminatory. How can the government believe that a threshold which clearly discriminates against emotionally disabled people will stand up in the courts? And when the courts strike it down, what will be left of the government's plan?" When the courts strike it down; not if, but when the courts strike it down, what will be left of the government plan?

ARCH indicates that it has carefully reviewed the 24 reports prepared for the government by its actuary, Joe Cheng. Let me tell members about this. Those were secret reports prepared surreptitiously and filed in a clandestine way that demonstrated that the government had its own agenda from day one. This government was not interested in what Kruger and the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board had to report or recommend, but the government had its own secret agenda, and that was one of no consultation; that was one of secrecy; that was one of surreptitiousness. Those are the reports prepared by actuary Joe Cheng, among others. They were only released after freedom-of-information applications and after a great deal of pressure imposed on that government, and after the general government committee's deliberations had virtually concluded, after a point in time when the general government committee was forbidden by the Liberal majority on that committee—forbidden, denied—the right to call any further witnesses so that those witnesses could examine these actuarial studies and tell the Liberal members and tell the people of Ontario, in fact, what they meant.

1050

Howard Collum and his wife from Thornhill called us this morning. Mr Collum and his wife know what it is like to have to deal with an insurance company. You see, Mr Collum's son was killed in 1981 in an accident. Mr and Mrs Collum from Thornhill know that corporate insurance companies do not have consciences. They do not have a sense of charity. They do not have compassion. They do not have a sense of community. Corporate insurance companies do not have a sense of caring.

Corporate insurance companies are designed to do one thing and one thing only, and that is to make money, that is to make profits. We know already how corporate insurance companies make profits. They do it by charging the maximum amount they can for premiums and by paying out the least amount they can in compensation. That is how that system works and there is simply no doubt about that. There are no two ways about it.

To Howard Collum and his wife in Thornhill: Mr Speaker, children are not supposed to die before their parents. You know that. That is a very special pain. Howard Collum and his wife know what it means to have to deal with an insurance company. You see, Howard Collum and his wife, knowing what they know, say to the Premier of Ontario, as they do, that the Premier should call an election on this issue because the Collums in Thornhill know that Bill 68 is all about just bigger profits for the insurance industry, lower benefits, less benefits, fewer benefits, less compensation for the innocent injured victims of Ontario.

Do Howard Collum and his wife have our compassion? Maybe. But will this government impose Bill 68, its threshold insurance scheme, on them, none the less? Probably. You know, sometimes, Mr Speaker, I think governments are like corporate insurance companies. I think that governments sometimes lose the compassion, lose the sense of caring, lose the sense of community. Governments form alliances, form allegiances, establish debts like this one has to the private corporate auto insurance industry. That is what will motivate and persuade this government to sell out, to forsake the drivers, the taxpayers and the innocent injured victims of Ontario in exchange for massive profits from what is already a profitable industry.

I have to tell you, Mr Speaker, that there are insurance company executives out there who insist that their industry is not making any profit. You want to know something? In 1990,

the same companies that are crying that they are going broke were crying that they were going broke back in 1955, in 1965, in 1975 and in 1985.

The same environment that maintained those going-broke companies attracted more and more auto insurance industries from the United States and from other provinces of Canada. That insurance industry we are speaking of has enjoyed, in the year 1989, record high profits for the last eight years: insurance company profits in Canada in excess of \$1 billion for the year 1989. That is not an industry that is going broke. That is an industry that the Liberals in Ontario are going to subsidize with Ontario taxpayers' money—\$141 million, \$142 million, perhaps as much as \$143 million in the first year alone.

That is an insurance industry that this government is going to grace with premium increases of as much as 50 per cent and, for almost a third of a million drivers right here in Ontario, premium increases of as high as 80 per cent. We are already talking about premiums in this province that have become increasingly and excessively unaffordable for the vast majority of drivers. We are talking about a threshold system that is a direct attack on senior citizens, that is a direct attack on small business people, and that is a direct attack on workers of all ilk, unionized and non-unionized.

It is an attack that is being vanguarded by the Liberal Party of Ontario. It is an attack that is being vanguarded by the Premier of this province—the very same Premier who in 1987 promised the people of Ontario that he, the Premier, had a very specific plan to reduce auto insurance premiums.

Ruby Brennan from Peterborough, who called us this morning, knows better and she says, "No way to no-fault and no way to closure from these guys."

John J. Irvine Real Estate in Welland phones in. As small business people they know that this Liberal government, this Liberal Party, this Liberal policy here in Ontario has become increasingly anti-small business. They know that Bill 68 is an attack on seniors, is an attack on farm workers, is an attack on the youth, is an attack on workers and is an attack on small business people. The people at John Irvine Real Estate know that down in Welland.

Ian Thompson Cooke calls in not only for himself but for his wife Mallory, and they know that.

Gerald Brould from New Liskeard, Ontario, knows that, too.

Wayne Hodges, calling from Toronto, knows that.

Lisa Morris, calling from Hamilton, knows that.

Mike McAlpine, calling from Ottawa, knows that.

Pel Capone, he knows that.

Kathleen Monaghan knows that.

Denise Furstun from Mississauga knows that.

Neil Langton called in this morning, too. He knows that.

Diane Miller from Toronto knows that.

Michael Kelly from Hamilton knows that.

Denise Carter from Welland knows that.

Don Joffrey from Hamilton, Frank Nicholas from Brampton, Michael McCutcheon from East York, Gary Godfrey from Guelph, Mr Purdy from Oakville, Susan Houle from Mississauga—in the course of some 14 or 15 hours, we are talking about 500, 600 people who have phoned us because we are not afraid to talk to the people of Ontario and we are not afraid to take on an industry—the auto insurance industry in this province—that has proven that it will never become a decent corporate citizen of our business community; that has demonstrated that it has long outlived any usefulness it ever might have had.

1100

All we want to do is debate Bill 68. That is all we want to do. You know, Mr Speaker, I have to thank you. Look at the hundreds and hundreds of phone calls. I know these people wanted to be acknowledged, and I thank them.

I thank Mary Coleman from Toronto; I thank Bruce Conkson from Toronto; I thank Carolyn Davidson; I thank Steven MacDonald; I thank André and Eileen Neal of Thunder Bay; I thank Brian Horowitz of Toronto; Mr Cheltenham; Rhonda from Watford; Mark Scanlan from Brandt; the people of Scarborough who called in; Walter Blunt, who called in a second time; Ellis MacDonald; Steve Langford from Temagami; Paul Kupferschmidt from Oakville; Leslie Chyka and Lucille from Coniston, Ontario; Mr MacFadden from Toronto; Stan Kukula; Nancy Bortnyck from Toronto; Moyra Arnold; Christine from Scarborough; John Dawson from Richmond Hill; Jim Richards from Parry Sound.

I thank these hundreds of people for participating in what is probably the most crucial debate that this Liberal government has ever forced upon this province. It is, because we are talking about legislation that is going to deny people the right to obtain access to a courtroom to seek remedies, to seek relief, to seek compensation for their pain and for their suffering. Mr Speaker, as I told you before, this legislation is as much about that as it is about insurance. The people of Ontario are afraid and I am afraid too. I am afraid and I make no bones about it.

We started debating this closure motion on 3 April 1990 and all we ever wanted to do was to talk about the auto insurance bill and to debate it and to attempt to persuade 29 Liberal backbenchers to vote against it, because that is all that is needed for this bill to be defeated. But you see, the Premier of Ontario, David Peterson, the Minister of Financial Institutions or the Liberal industry itself do not want to debate Bill 68. And damn it, they will use their majority to ensure that they will not have to debate it.

I have prevailed upon the government House leader, I have pleaded with the government House leader to withdraw this motion. I tell you now, Mr Speaker, because I have been talking for some 23½ hours, since 3 April until last night at six o'clock, and from last night at six o'clock until now. I do not know how many hours that is.

An hon member: It's 17.

Mr Kormos: Some 17 hours? So be it. But I tell you, Mr Speaker, I do not think the Liberal House leader is going to withdraw this closure motion. What that means is that the people of Ontario will never see a debate about the most significant legislation, as I told you, that these Liberals have foisted upon this province. I have come here with material that I wanted to talk about. I wanted to talk about what is in this envelope, I wanted to talk about the material in here, I wanted to talk about this material, I wanted to talk about these documents and I wanted to talk about this material.

But I do not think the Liberals of this province are prepared to listen. They are not prepared to listen to the 500 or 600 or so good people who called in over the last 12, 13, 14, 15 hours. They are not prepared to call an election, which is the decent thing to do, because decency is not a part of their vocabulary. Decency is not a policy of the Liberal government here at Queen's Park.

So I tell you, Mr Speaker, I am tired. I am tired from having spoken since six o'clock last night. I could carry on. I could go on until one o'clock, two o'clock, or four or five. I could go on through to midnight tonight, I am sure of that, because my

passion for the rights of drivers and taxpayers and, oh yes, innocent injured victims in this province is strong enough and has been reinforced by those hundreds and thousands of people phoning in and writing letters pleading for some decency and for some democracy here at Queen's Park. My passion is that strong.

But do you know what, Mr Speaker? I am fearful that the Liberals here do not listen. I am fearful that the Liberals do not care. I am fearful that the bonds between the Liberal Party in Ontario and the auto insurance industry are simply too strong to let the Liberals do what is right and do what is decent. At that, there is going to be an election in 1990, maybe before, probably after, Bill 68 gets rammed through, but we will let the electorate decide, I tell you that.

[Applause]

Mr Runciman: I want to say off the top that it is not very often that I participate in a standing ovation for a member of the NDP.

An hon member: That's pretty scary.

Mr Runciman: Yes, it is scary in some respects. I recall reading one of the columns—I think it was Michael Bennett's—in the Toronto Sun saying that usually the member for Welland-Thorold and I are so far apart on issues that we need a courier to trade insults, but I want to say that is not the case in most instances.

I want to take this opportunity to say that both the member for Welland-Thorold and I served on the committee taking a look at Bill 68. He mentioned his passion, and I think that has been indicated with respect to this debate and the hours that he has been able to carry on, because he feels so strongly about this issue. I want to say that I share that strength of feeling about this particular issue and the way the people of this province have been dealt with with respect to their feelings and views, in essence, not being heard but being ignored by the Liberal government of Ontario.

We sat through hour after hour of testimony, overwhelmingly in opposition to this legislation. It was for the most part ignored by the Liberal government, ignored by the rubber-stampers who served on that committee, simply there to act on behalf of their political masters in the Premier's office. They did not listen to the very moving testimony.

I used language during those committee hearings that I was not proud of—it was very much unparliamentary—but I think it was indicative of the strong feelings that I had. I have said this before: I have been a member of this Legislature for over nine years and I do not think that I have heard such moving testimony as I heard during those hearings, when we have people appearing before us who have suffered very serious injuries as a result of accidents, who have no vested interests, nothing to gain by the passage or defeat of this legislature, but who are concerned about future innocent accident victims in this province and the fact that they are not going to be served well by this particular piece of legislation. This debate is all about time allocation. What it is really all about is having an opportunity for those very many concerns to be heard in an adequate and appropriate manner.

What we have seen here is the Minister of Financial Institutions and the government House leader overreact in what has to be only deemed as an arrogant manner, which is becoming increasingly indicative of the actions of this Liberal government. What happened after two days of committee-of-the-whole debate? We had a move to introduce time allocation and

restrict debate to two days in committee of the whole and one day for third reading. Our party has a significant number of amendments to put on the record. We have many, many people in this province who want those concerns on the record, who want amendments made to this legislation to address those concerns, and we are not going to be given the opportunity to do that.

So when the member for Welland-Thorold started on this debate, he wanted to put those views on the record. Our party certainly wants to have the same kind of opportunity. We have at least 15 to 20 amendments which we are not going to be given an opportunity to discuss during committee of the whole in an adequate way. It is going to be tough even moving them, Mr Speaker, as you well appreciate. So we have to do it through this forum and take the limited opportunity that is presented to us.

I want to say there are many members on this side of the House who want to participate in that kind of debate, who want to put the views of their own constituents on the record. And that opportunity is not going to be afforded to them because of the time allocation, the closure, in effect, that is being brought in by the Liberal government of Ontario. So we have very few opportunities afforded to us.

We have heard some public expressions of concern about this legislation, but it is regrettable that none of the Liberal members apparently is prepared to stand up on his feet, voice those in the Legislature and speak up on behalf of the many constituents of his own who have very real doubts about the legislation.

The member for Welland-Thorold talked about this being a windfall to the insurance industry. He went on at length about that, as I have. It is very clearly representative of approximately a \$1-billion windfall to the insurance industry in this province. That is what we are talking about, a \$1-billion windfall. We do not know what this is going to cost us in terms of taxpayers, other than the tax breaks the insurance industry is getting, which total about \$143 million. We do not know what it is going to cost us to establish this significant bureaucracy to deal with this bill, to deal with the dispute resolution mechanism that is being developed under this legislation. There are all sorts of costs, many of them hidden, but they are going to show up in our tax bills. They are going to show up as costs. They will not show up as costs for auto insurance, but they are there and they are very real to the people of this province.

The bottom line, and we can debate this, is we have heard the government talk about the no-fault enhanced benefits, etc, but its own actuaries indicated very clearly in the studies tabled on the last day of the committee hearings that what we are really going to see here is a 47 per cent net loss in benefits to the people of this province. What we are talking about are average increases of eight per cent. So we are going to see almost a 50 per cent reduction in benefits, and what are we going to do? We are going to pay more for it.

Let's go back to the promise of the Premier in 1987 when he said, "I have a very specific plan to lower automobile insurance rates in this province," when he had no specific plan. He misled the electorate of Ontario and he is trying to do it again with the budget introduced this week. He is trying to fool the people of this province with their own money. I am telling you, Mr Speaker, we in the opposition are doing the best job we can to make sure that the people are aware of it.

The government once again yesterday stumbled, kicked itself with respect to the way it has handled this legislation, shoving it down our throats, going around the clock 24 hours, but what it has really done is draw more attention to the arrogance of this government and to the very real failings of this legislation.

I know many of the members of the Legislature are tired, and some have headaches for a variety of reasons which I will not get into today. Knowing this is Friday and we would all like to be in our constituencies doing what we have to do in those areas of responsibility, I hope to have an opportunity next week to carry on with this debate and put the concerns of our party on the record.

On motion by Mr Runciman, the debate was adjourned.

Mr Ward moved the adjournment of the House.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Some hon members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 1114.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS
(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|---|
| Adams, Peter | Peterborough | L | Assistant to the Minister of the Environment |
| Allen, Richard | Hamilton West | NDP | |
| Ballinger, William G. | Durham-York | L | Assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Beer, Hon Charles | York North | L | Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. | Muskoka-Georgian Bay | L | Minister of Tourism and Recreation, minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Bossy, Maurice L. | Chatham-Kent | L | Assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Bradley, Hon James J. | St Catharines | L | Minister of the Environment |
| Brandt, Andrew S. | Sarnia | PC | Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party |
| Breaugh, Michael J. | Oshawa | NDP | First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Brown, Michael A. | Algoma-Manitoulin | L | |
| Bryden, Marion | Beaches-Woodbine | NDP | |
| Callahan, Robert V. | Brampton South | L | |
| Campbell, Sterling | Sudbury | L | |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor | Oriole | L | Minister of Health |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. | Oakville South | L | Assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Charlton, Brian A. | Hamilton Mountain | NDP | |
| Chiarelli, Robert | Ottawa West | L | |
| Cleary, John C. | Cornwall | L | Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Collins, Hon Shirley | Wentworth East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. | Renfrew North | L | Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities, Minister of Skills Development |
| Cooke, David R. | Kitchener | L | Assistant to the Minister of Citizenship |
| Cooke, David S. | Windsor-Riverside | NDP | House leader |
| Cordiano, Joseph | Lawrence | L | |
| Cousens, W. Donald | Markham | PC | |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. | London North | PC | |
| Cureatz, Sam L. | Durham East | PC | Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Curling, Alvin | Scarborough North | L | Assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Daigeler, Hans | Nepean | L | Assistant to the Minister of Revenue |
| Dietsch, Michael M. | St Catharines-Brock | L | Assistant to the Minister of Labour |
| Eakins, John F. | Victoria-Haliburton | L | |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. | Perth | L | Speaker |
| Elliot, R. Walter | Halton North | L | Assistant to the Minister of Housing |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. | Bruce | L | Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Financial Institutions |
| Epp, Herbert A. | Waterloo North | L | |
| Eves, Ernie L. | Parry Sound | PC | House leader |
| Farnan, Michael | Cambridge | NDP | |
| Faubert, Frank | Scarborough-Ellesmere | L | |
| Fawcett, Joan M. | Northumberland | L | Assistant to the Minister of Skills Development |
| Ferraro, Rick E. | Guelph | L | Assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|---|
| Fleet, David | High Park-Swansea | L | Assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Fontaine, Hon René | Cochrane North | L | Minister of Northern Development |
| Fulton, Ed | Scarborough East | L | Assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation |
| Furlong, Allan W. | Durham Centre | L | |
| Grandmaître, Bernard C. | Ottawa East | L | Assistant to the Minister of Health |
| Grier, Ruth A. | Etobicoke-Lakeshore | NDP | |
| Haggerty, Ray | Niagara South | L | Assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| Hampton, Howard | Rainy River | NDP | |
| Harris, Michael D. | Nipissing | PC | |
| Hart, Hon Christine E. | York East | L | Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Henderson, D. James | Etobicoke-Humber | L | Assistant to the minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Hošek, Chaviva | Oakwood | L | Assistant to the Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet |
| Jackson, Cameron | Burlington South | PC | |
| Johnson, Jack | Wellington | PC | |
| Johnston, Richard F. | Scarborough West | NDP | |
| Kanter, Ron | St Andrew-St Patrick | L | |
| Kerrio, Vincent G. | Niagara Falls | L | |
| Keyes, Kenneth A. | Kingston and The Islands | L | Assistant to the Minister of Education |
| Kormos, Peter | Welland-Thorold | NDP | |
| Kozyra, Taras B. | Port Arthur | L | Assistant to the Minister of Northern Development |
| Kwinter, Hon Monte | Wilson Heights | L | Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Laughren, Floyd | Nickel Belt | NDP | |
| LeBourdais, Linda | Etobicoke West | L | |
| Leone, Laureano | Downsview | L | Assistant to the Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Lipsett, Ron | Grey | L | Assistant to the Minister of Energy |
| Lupusella, Tony | Dovercourt | L | Assistant to the Minister of Government Services |
| MacDonald, Keith | Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings | L | |
| Mackenzie, Bob | Hamilton East | NDP | |
| Mahoney, Steven W. | Mississauga West | L | |
| Mancini, Hon Remo | Essex South | L | Minister of Revenue |
| Marland, Margaret | Mississauga South | PC | |
| Martel, Shelley | Sudbury East | NDP | |
| Matrundola, Gino | Willowdale | L | |
| McCague, George R. | Simcoe West | PC | |
| McClelland, Carman | Brampton North | L | |
| McGuigan, James F. | Essex-Kent | L | Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| McLean, Allan K. | Simcoe East | PC | |
| McLeod, Hon Lyn | Fort William | L | Minister of Energy, Minister of Natural Resources |
| Miclash, Frank | Kenora | L | |
| Miller, Gordon I. | Norfolk | L | Assistant to the Minister of Transportation |
| Morin, Hon Gilles E. | Carleton East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Morin-Strom, Karl E. | Sault Ste Marie | NDP | |
| Neumann, David E. | Brantford | L | |
| Nicholas, Cindy | Scarborough Centre | L | Assistant to the Solicitor General |
| Nixon, J. Bradford | York Mills | L | |
| Nixon, Hon Robert F. | Brant-Haldimand | L | Deputy Premier, Treasurer of Ontario, Minister of Economics |
| Oddie Munro, Lily | Hamilton Centre | L | |
| Offer, Hon Steven | Mississauga North | L | Solicitor General |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|---|
| O'Neil, Hon Hugh P. | Quinte | L | Minister of Mines |
| O'Neill, Yvonne | Ottawa-Rideau | L | |
| Owen, Bruce | Simcoe Centre | L | |
| Patten, Hon Richard | Ottawa Centre | L | Minister of Correctional Services |
| Pelissero, Harry E. | Lincoln | L | |
| Peterson, Hon David R. | London Centre | L | Premier, President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Philip, Ed | Etobicoke-Rexdale | NDP | |
| Phillips, Hon Gerry | Scarborough-Agincourt | L | Minister of Labour |
| Poirier, Jean | Prescott and Russell | L | Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Pollock, Jim | Hastings-Peterborough | PC | |
| Polsinelli, Claudio | Yorkview | L | Assistant to the Attorney General |
| Poole, Dianne | Eglinton | L | Assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Pope, Alan W. | Cochrane South | PC | |
| Pouliot, Gilles | Lake Nipigon | NDP | |
| Rae, Bob | York South | NDP | Leader of the Official Opposition |
| Ramsay, Hon David | Timiskaming | L | Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Ray, Michael C. | Windsor-Walkerville | L | |
| Reville, David | Riverdale | NDP | Chief whip |
| Reycraft, Douglas R. | Middlesex | L | Assistant to the Treasurer and Minister of Economics |
| Riddell, Jack | Huron | L | Assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources |
| Roberts, Marietta L. D. | Elgin | L | |
| Runciman, Robert W. | Leeds-Grenville | PC | |
| Ruprecht, Tony | Parkdale | L | Assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services |
| Scott, Hon Ian G. | St George-St David | L | Attorney General |
| Smith, David W. | Lambton | L | Assistant to the Minister of Correctional Services |
| Smith, E. Joan | London South | L | Chief government whip |
| Sola, John | Mississauga East | L | |
| Sorbara, Hon Gregory S. | York Centre | L | Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| South, Larry | Frontenac-Addington | L | Assistant to the Minister of Mines |
| Sterling, Norman W. | Carleton | PC | |
| Stoner, Norah | Durham West | L | Assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities |
| Sullivan, Barbara | Halton Centre | L | |
| Sweeney, Hon John | Kitchener-Wilmot | L | Minister of Housing and Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Tatham, Charlie | Oxford | L | |
| Velshi, Murad | Don Mills | L | |
| Villeneuve, Noble | Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry | PC | Chief whip |
| Ward, Hon Christopher C. | Wentworth North | L | Minister of Government Services, government House leader |
| Wildman, Bud | Algoma | NDP | |
| Wilson, Hon Mavis, | Dufferin-Peel | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Wiseman, Douglas J. | Lanark-Renfrew | PC | |
| Wong, Hon Robert C. | Fort York | L | Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for the Ontario Human Rights Commission, minister responsible for multiculturalism, minister responsible for race relations |
| Wrye, Hon William | Windsor-Sandwich | L | Minister of Transportation |
| Vacant | Ottawa South | | |

A list of committee members is published in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

CONTENTS

Friday 27 April 1990

| Government motion | Other business |
|--|--|
| Time allocation, motion 30851 | Adjournment896 |
| Mr Kormos851 | Alphabetical list of members897 |
| Mr Runciman895 | |
| Adjourned896 | |

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Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 30 April 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le lundi 30 avril 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Languages in Hansard

Hansard reports all debates in English or French as spoken by the participants. It does not translate remarks made in either language. Headings and tables of contents reflect language use.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 30 April 1990

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

COURT FACILITIES

Mr Kormos: As members know, the Niagara Falls provincial courthouse was shut down by the province a few weeks ago. Now the Welland county courthouse, a majestic building over a century old, is rumoured to be similarly shut down two days from now, on Wednesday. This building accommodates the district court, the Supreme Court, the registrar's office and judges' chambers. It is crucial to the administration of justice in Niagara South.

We are told that the Ministry of Labour has concerns around fire safety in the building and that an order will be obtained under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. For months and years now, the city of Welland has been looking to the province for a commitment around the renovation and ongoing use of this city-owned building. All that has happened to date is a lot of fudging around with no effective communication between Welland city council and the provincial government.

The Attorney General has expressed his commitment to an ongoing court presence in the city of Welland; quite properly, the Attorney General recognizes the historical and practical significance of Welland as a county, and now a district, seat. Welland is eager to accommodate Ministry of the Attorney General. If the ministry finds the renovation plans for the existing courthouse acceptable, then it should say so, so that work can get under way. If they are not acceptable, then it should similarly say so, so that alternative sites can be investigated and proposed by the city of Welland.

Time is of the essence. Today is not too soon to start discussing courthouse plans for Welland. We in Welland look forward to being able to sit down with the Attorney General and his staff and engage in some meaningful and productive dialogue.

ARBOUR WEEK

Mrs Marland: I would like to call attention to the celebration of Arbour Week, which started on Friday and continues until 6 May. This tradition dates back more than 100 years and continues its goal to encourage the planting and preservation of trees. Today that goal is more important than ever, as we realize the damage that pollution has done to our planet. Trees can play a vital role in reversing that damage and maintaining the delicate balance of the earth's ecosystems.

Many communities across the province already have tree planting programs, and we urge others to take up the challenge of Arbour Week. Planting trees is a natural way to clean up our air and an opportunity to preserve and protect our environment for future generations. Trees offer a variety of benefits, many of which are crucial to our wellbeing. They regulate worldwide atmospheric systems, filter air pollution, absorb carbon dioxide, reduce noise pollution, provide recreational opportunities, prevent soil erosion, provide wind breaks, conserve energy by shading buildings and increase property values.

Each tree will help to create a cleaner, more serene and beautiful environment in which to live. This week plant a tree and make a difference.

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr Tatham: On 5 December 1989, an electrically powered train, number 325 of the TGV Atlantique, broke the world record for rail speed at 482.4 kilometres per hour. Will high-speed, 200- to 500-kilometre-per-hour, ground transportation play a role in the North American intercity transportation system of the 21st century?

A hundred years ago, the February 1890 issue of *The Railway Age* said:

"Electric street railways continue to multiply remarkably. The number of these roads in operation in the United States in January is stated at 162 and numerous other lines are under construction or projected. In towns and cities where the traffic is not heavy it seems to be demonstrated that electricity forms a more economical and satisfactory motor than horses for street-car propulsion, although it is liable to occasional eccentricities. The great majority of the lines thus far constituted use the overhead wire system, although storage batteries are used in a few cases, and the plan of running the electric conductor in a conduit under the car has certain evident advantages."

Perhaps, 100 years later, North Americans will decide to join the high-speed rail movement.

DONALD SMILEY

Mr Allen: One of Canada's most-loved teachers and scholars in political science died in his sleep in the early hours of Saturday last.

Donald Smiley of York University spent his long career researching, writing and reflecting on the nature of Canadian federalism. The list of his works comprises six full pages of print and includes 17 books.

He was a gentle man, always more concerned with understanding than with controversy, but his feelings ran deep for Canada, as our select committee on constitutional and inter-governmental affairs had occasion to learn as recently as two weeks ago when he came before us.

Smiley recognized that it required hard work and hard thinking to keep Canada together, but it was very much worth doing. He was therefore always in tune with what was going on, and always from the perspective of classical liberalism.

He was long a vice-president of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, and his delight in Canadian federalism was the manner in which it could preserve the liberties of the subject and peoples and regions over and against the power of majorities and undue centralization.

In 1980 he found federalism and sovereignty association incompatible. In 1990 he believed Meech Lake offered an accommodation with Quebec well worth the risks entailed, but he believed a Senate of equal provinces would deny the nation's historic duality.

Always he believed that the state exists for the good life and that the claims of political nationality can be defended only if they are illumined by some vision of political community.

DISABLED STUDENTS

Mr Sterling: I would like to make a brief statement with regard to the teachers' strike in the Ottawa area. There have been 17,000 elementary school students out for about two weeks.

While I am concerned about all of these students and that they all get back to school, I am particularly concerned with the 200 severely handicapped students who cannot attend school at this time. The Ottawa Board of Education, in its wisdom, and probably in a very responsible manner, closed the Clifford Bowey school because of the very special needs of those students. Parents of these students unfortunately are not in a position to provide for alternative care for these students. Unfortunately, the teachers of that particular school would not return to the classroom to take care of these very special students.

I am not sure who is at fault in this dispute with regard to both sides, either the teachers or the board, but perhaps it is time to reconsider the right to strike of teachers who are caring for these very special students when a dispute arises between a board of education and teachers. I do not propose that with regard to right to strike of all teachers, but perhaps this is an essential service which we have to take care of in the future. Maybe it is time for a legislative change.

1340

PLASTICS RECYCLING

Mr Neumann: I would like to tell members of the House about an exciting new company in Brantford which recently held its official opening. I had the pleasure of participating in the ribbon-cutting for Resource Plastics Corp and was amazed by the technology which has been developed by this company.

Many have called this the most advanced plastics recycling plant on the continent. Recently, Resource Plastics became the first North American company to be able to recycle waste containing more than one type of plastic. As members will be aware, this has been one of the difficulties with the recycling process up to now, because waste had to be very specifically sorted. This company also has the ability to recycle starch-filled scrap from the manufacture of garbage bags and diapers.

Most of the waste recycled at the plant is produced into pellet form which is then sold to other companies for conversion into finished products. It is incredible to hear that this new technology has allowed the conversion of the foil-like material on the outside of potato chip bags, to be made into flower pots, and coffee cream containers, to be made into windshield scrapers.

A grant of \$610,000 from the Ministry of the Environment helped the parent company, Polymer Developments Corp, to establish Resource Plastics.

During a period when we are all becoming more conscious of the 4Rs, I am tremendously pleased that a local company is at the forefront in the recycling of plastics. While efforts to reduce waste must continue, it is good to know we are developing technology right here in Ontario which is in the forefront in our world.

TIMBER MANAGEMENT

Mr Hampton: As the environmental assessment hearings to assess the timber management program of the Ministry of Natural Resources continue in Thunder Bay, the lack of adequate reforestation planning is evidenced day after day. The ministry recently acknowledged that it has little knowledge of

the reforestation success rates, though at the hearings it was estimated that there is a regeneration gap of nearly 1,000 square kilometres annually in Ontario of trees cut and not replanted.

A former MNR regeneration specialist testified that the government emphasizes the number of acres treated, not the number of acres successfully treated. Further questioning has revealed that there was no province-wide objective for the ministry's regeneration program, no complete information on success rates of either natural or artificial regeneration plans and no documentation of whether industry is starting to use newer equipment which is less damaging to the forest floor.

Three and a half years ago, the dean of the University of New Brunswick school of forestry, Gordon Baskerville, said that the Ontario MNR functioned as a bureaucracy of the worst kind, misusing statistics, failing to listen to the public and cutting 23 per cent of the province's most productive forest area without a management plan. Clearly the situation has not changed much. As a result, the evidence grows that the public has little faith in these hearings, because right now there are 10 outstanding requests for individual assessments above and beyond the class assessment.

NORTHERN ONTARIO ARTISTS

Mr Eves: It is a pleasure for me to rise in the House this afternoon and welcome three of my constituents from the Mattawa Arts Council: Judy Duval, representing the executive; Clermont Duval, a renowned artist in northern Ontario, and David Barrer, an artist in his own right who also owns Timeless Art Editions in Mattawa.

I would urge the people on the government benches to consider these people when they are talking about the northern Ontario relocation program arts steering committee for works by northern Ontario artists. Here are two of Clermont Duval's most recent pieces of work. He has become quite a renowned artist, not only in the province of Ontario but all over.

I think it is a real tribute to people in Ontario that we have such dedicated and talented people in our midst. They have made a habit of coming to Queen's Park and displaying some of their paintings in my office from time to time. I welcome them and I would urge all other members of the Legislative Assembly to drop by my office at any time and see their great works.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Mr Kanter: On behalf of the government of Ontario, I rise today to acknowledge a special anniversary, the establishment of the state of Israel 42 years ago, on 14 May 1948. I want to recognize the presence of Benjamin Abileah, the consul general of Israel, his wife, Ruth, and some leaders of Ontario's Jewish community who are in the gallery in recognition of this important day.

Of course, the state of Israel has ancient roots. Thousands of years ago, its law provided an early model for the democratic state of Israel. The establishment of the modern state was a matter of life itself for victims of the Holocaust. It was also a profound moment for Jews in Ontario and throughout the world. The creation of the state of Israel helped Jews to move beyond prejudice and quotas into full participation in all aspects of Ontario's life.

During the years since 1948, Israel succeeded in integrating hundreds of thousands of new residents from virtually every country of the world, and today again faces the challenges of accepting and integrating up to a million new residents from the Soviet Union who are leaving in a modern-day exodus.

I am optimistic that Israel's future, which sometimes appears rocky, will be hopeful and that the sentiments of its national anthem, Hatikvah, which means hope, will be fulfilled.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

TORONTO WATERFRONT

Hon Mr Sweeney: In its 1989 interim report, the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront articulated the overwhelming concern that development of Harbourfront had gone wrong.

On 13 December 1989 what was wrong at Harbourfront was about to be set for ever in a wall of concrete and steel. As members will remember, it was on that day that the government imposed a zoning order on the Harbourfront area, under section 46 of the Planning Act. The zoning order provided an opportunity to change the face of the waterfront. This government was determined to ensure that an open, accessible waterfront was maintained for the enjoyment of the people of Ontario.

In imposing the zoning order, I therefore directed a provincial team to seek a better solution for Harbourfront and to meet the following three objectives:

First, access to the waterfront must be returned to the people of Ontario.

Second, I agreed with many in the arts and cultural community that good programs should not depend on bad buildings. Harbourfront must be financed or endowed sufficiently to permit its excellent core cultural, recreation and educational programming activities to continue.

Third, the city of Toronto must be accorded fair treatment of its claims for park lands and revenues from the Harbourfront site.

The provincial team submitted its report and recommendations to me on 23 March. I immediately presented the provincial report and recommendations to the Honourable Elmer MacKay, federal Minister of Public Works. The federal minister requested time to consider the report's recommendations prior to public release.

I wish to report to the House that the federal minister today announced the appointment of Darcy McKeough, former Treasurer of Ontario, to represent the federal government in the implementation of the provincial government report. I am today releasing the provincial government report so that all citizens of Ontario will be aware of the issues with which Mr McKeough will be working.

The historic report, which I am tabling today, is a blueprint for protecting our waterfront. Simply stated, public access to the waterfront is assured. Under the provincial proposal, no further buildings will be built south of Queen's Quay. In fact, the total density of the Harbourfront site will be significantly reduced. The people of Toronto will also receive their parks and green space in Harbourfront. In addition, important site transportation services will be implemented.

Harbourfront's excellent cultural programs will continue with the establishment of a \$50-million endowment fund. Revenues from this fund will guarantee Harbourfront's lasting cultural legacy. No longer will good programs depend upon inappropriate development.

The federal government and its partners, the city and Metropolitan Toronto governments, have a working blueprint which will ensure a bright and promising future for Harbourfront. In order to ensure an orderly implementation, I will maintain my zoning order until such time as I am assured by the

partners that they have reached agreement on the implementation details of the final plan.

In closing, Mr Speaker, please allow me to congratulate the provincial team under the direction of Deputy Minister Duncan Allan for this outcome. I am proud of the role the province has played on behalf of the people of Toronto and of all Ontario.

1350

CHILD PROTECTION

PROTECTION DES ENFANTS

Hon Mr Beer: I would like to inform members of the House that the government is undertaking a review of procedures currently in place to ensure the safety and protection of children in residential placements across the province. Over the past number of weeks, serious allegations have emerged regarding physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children in training schools in the early 1960s.

As a government, our response to these reports has been threefold. Our first response was to accelerate the police investigation by doubling the number of investigators and establishing an OPP hotline. Our second response was to ensure that support and counselling were available to anyone who may have come forward regarding these matters. Our third response relates to the question of public confidence in the system as it exists today.

Au cours des 30 dernières années, notre système de soins en établissement dispensés aux enfants a connu de nombreuses modifications, modifications qui visent à faire en sorte que les enfants et les jeunes soient mieux protégés contre les mauvais traitements et les agressions.

Depuis la fin des années 1970, tous les paliers de gouvernement se sont efforcés, ensemble, de prévenir les mauvais traitements infligés aux enfants à l'aide de campagnes de sensibilisation du public sur une grande échelle et de cours d'éducation et de formation à l'intention des professionnels concernés.

Nous disposons, à l'heure actuelle, de garanties considérables, à la fois aux niveaux législatif et administratif, pour veiller à ce que les enfants placés dans des programmes en établissement soient protégés contre toute forme de mauvais traitements et d'agression.

In the last 30 years many changes have been made to our system of residential care for children, changes which ensure that children and youth are better protected against abuse and assault. Since the late 1970s there has been a concerted, committed effort by all governments to prevent child abuse through extensive public awareness and professional education and training.

Our current legislative and administrative safeguards for protecting children from abuse and assault in residential programs are extensive. Every child, when admitted to any form of residential care, whether to a group home, foster home or one of our secure custody facilities, is instructed and given information on individual rights and how to make a complaint if he or she is dissatisfied with treatment.

All children and youth in residential care have direct access to the provincial child advocate or the provincial Ombudsman. The roles and responsibilities of children's aid societies and police authorities in responding to allegations of abuse are also clearly set out.

Our current safeguards are extensive, but we cannot be complacent. The general public and the parents of children and

youth who are placed in residential programs in Ontario need to be assured that safeguards are in place and are effective.

I am therefore announcing that Joanne Campbell, the current chairperson of the Social Assistance Review Board, will conduct an examination of the safeguards and procedures that are currently in place. This examination will determine the effectiveness and adequacy of the safeguards which are intended to protect children in residential facilities against physical, sexual and emotional abuse and assault; ensure that, if allegations of abuse are made, the systems are in place to deal with these complaints in a responsive and effective manner, and provide recommendations for any improvements in safeguards which may be necessary.

This review will encompass all residential programs provided to children and youth under the Child and Family Services Act and young offender placements under the Ministry of Correctional Services Act. These programs include group homes, foster care and institutions operated by the government and through children's aid societies, young offender services, child treatment and child and family intervention programs and associations for community living.

I have asked Ms Campbell to submit her report by the end of October. I might add that she has renewed her contract as chairperson of the Social Assistance Review Board but, during the period of the review, many of her duties will be performed by a vice-chairperson.

Like everyone else in this assembly, I am disturbed by these current stories and accounts of child abuse.

Comme je l'ai précisé, les procédures actuellement en place pour faire enquête sur les mauvais traitements infligés aux enfants sont plus considérables et strictes que celles qui existaient par le passé. Je tiens, par conséquent, à rassurer l'Assemblée que le bien-être de nos enfants est quelque chose que nous ne tiendrons certainement pas pour acquis.

As I have indicated, the procedures currently in place to investigate child abuse are far more extensive and rigorous than those in the past, but we want to assure this House that we will not take for granted the future welfare of our children.

We have, as a society, made significant progress in our understanding of the impact of child abuse and the measures intended to prevent the abuse of children and youth. However, we must be vigilant and, as a government, we are committed to use every means available to prevent the abuse of our children.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY COMPENSATION FUND

Hon Mr Sorbara: I would like to provide a brief update in connection with the receiverships last week of Odyssey International Airlines and Thomson Vacations.

These were the largest failures ever experienced in Ontario's travel industry, and a number of steps were taken to deal with the resulting disruption of consumers' travel plans. In a very short space of time, 12 flights were arranged to bring stranded travellers home and more are being scheduled.

In that regard, I would like to thank in particular Dennis Gill and Robby Goldberg of the Canadian Association of Tour Operators and John Kennedy and Mark Grummett of the Alliance of Canadian Travel Associations for their part in making this airlift such a success.

An estimated 5,000 travellers outside of Canada required alternative transportation to return. About 3,000 of those will have been brought home by later today. We expect most of the remainder will have been repatriated within the next couple of weeks when their holiday plans come to an end. Those who have had to pay additional money for hotel bills or travel will

be able to make a claim on the Ontario travel industry compensation fund.

About 15,000 consumers who have had their future travel plans affected have been advised or are being advised to contact their travel agent for details on making alternative arrangements.

As well, the ministry will be issuing information tomorrow to advise consumers affected by the receiverships on how those eligible will be able to make a claim against the travel compensation fund. The appropriate claims forms are expected to be in the hands of travel agents by the end of this week. In the meantime, the ministry is advising affected consumers to contact their travel agent at the end of this week to begin the application process.

RESPONSES

TRAVEL INDUSTRY COMPENSATION FUND

Mr B. Rae: The consumers and the travellers may be partially compensated for their loss of enjoyment and for the problems they have faced, but I want to tell the minister—and I hope he will talk about this with his colleague sitting right next to him—that the employees from these companies have been shafted. In some cases, they have been working for as long as two or three weeks for free because they were told that the cheque was in the mail and everything was going to be okay, and they are now left with absolutely nothing. In fact, the employees who are working to bring the people home are putting in free time at the moment in order to bring those people home.

So I say to the minister that it just will not do for the thousands of Ontario employees who are and have been affected by bankruptcies this year, and the number is increasing because of the change in the economy, for this government to sit on its hands as it has done for the last seven years in the face of this issue. That is something which must be addressed.

We must get a handle on what is happening to workers in this province whose wages, vacation pay and severance pay is so badly affected by the collapse of these businesses. It is a disgrace that the government has failed to act on the bankruptcy front with the same speed with which it has acted in helping the travellers who have been affected and inconvenienced by the bankruptcy of these companies.

1400

TORONTO WATERFRONT

Mr Reville: I feel sympathy today for the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who has had to make what he has had to call a historic statement about Harbourfront.

For four and a half years, this Liberal government slept at the switch while its developer friends made millions of dollars erecting a wall of concrete and steel on the waterfront. It is as though suddenly, after four and a half years, the Premier stood up and said: "There shall be no shed. I have a very specific plan to lower the height of the buildings on the waterfront." Is he planning to demolish the Admiral Hotel? Should guests pack in a hurry, one wonders?

This zoning control was a phoney because in fact they froze the zoning on an area on which no development was contemplated at all. The Minister of Municipal Affairs has had to make the statement. Too bad for him.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr Allen: Regarding the Minister of Community and Social Services' announcement of an investigation or study of the safeguards and protection of children and youth in residential placements, the statement of the minister observes that, "Since the late 1970s there has been a concerted, committed effort by all governments to prevent child abuse through extensive public awareness and professional education and training."

However, one would have to observe, for example, that with a provincial child advocate arrangement in Ontario which has one party at work in the field and is massively underfunded, it is not surprising that there is relatively little access to it or a great deal of action that results from that particular endeavour.

The government itself has had two major studies on advocacy, O'Sullivan's report and Fram's report, and neither of those has been activated in any way whatsoever.

Also, one makes the observation that the provincial reviews that were the subject of the report in the *Globe and Mail* this morning of children in care as crown wards do not bother to ask the children themselves about their sense of the quality of care. That being so, it is no wonder that perhaps there is some more information that comes out more periodically and more regularly on this particular question.

The problem throughout this whole structure of institutions is the difficulty of securing foster homes and of finding staff who will work at the pay levels that are available in those institutions such as group homes, and therefore the constant turnover of staff. You have the problem that children's aid societies, half of them per year, are under exceptional reviews, in the sense that many have overexpended their budgets and therefore, obviously, are under major pressures.

Case loads are phenomenal where people are dealing with children in care, and the result is that it is very difficult for the institutions to keep track of what they are doing, what is happening to the kids. The whole system badly needs an overview. One would wonder perhaps if some of the institutions of private-home child care might not be included in it and the review broadened. But this is necessary and it must be pursued very vigorously, with results intended to take place at the end of it.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY COMPENSATION FUND

Mr Runciman: I have a brief response to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. We are also pleased that the travel industry compensation fund established by the Conservative government was able to assist the consumers who were found in difficult circumstances, to say the least, by the collapse of Odyssey.

I gather that the minister has some concerns, but I think we need more than concerns here in respect to determining why consumers were placed in jeopardy, why the rug was pulled out by the banks putting them in this situation.

Obviously there has been some speculation in respect to the ministry's knowledge of the circumstances Odyssey faced prior to this occurring, and in fact discussions were under way with the banks. If indeed that is the case, I think there is a significant degree of responsibility that falls upon the government's shoulders in respect to what happened to those consumers who found themselves without transportation back from various points south.

I want to add my thanks and my party's thanks to those workers who found themselves without jobs overnight and who

have volunteered their services over the weekend to try to facilitate the return of those many travellers.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr Runciman: In a brief response to the Minister of Community and Social Services, I want to say that we on this side of the House wish Ms Campbell well in respect to her investigation.

The minister may not have to look too far in respect to weaknesses. I can point to the Prescott situation with the significant number of child abuse cases and the problems faced by the children's aid society in my region in respect to funding. Last year, there was a deficit approaching \$700,000. A joint provincial-municipal committee was established to determine who was responsible for that deficit. The bulk of the deficit was deemed to be the responsibility of the provincial government. None of those funds have flowed to the CAS up to this point; none of those funds have flowed in respect to that deficit.

We also have the funding for the ongoing investigation and the additional burden placed upon the CAS in response to the Prescott situation. Again, this is a case of getting down on bended knee and pulling teeth to get those funds flowing.

I want to say, while I have this opportunity, that I am very complimentary of the Prescott police, the OPP, who have been involved in those investigations and the Lanark and Leeds-Grenville children's aid societies who have worked many long hours, very dedicated people working under very difficult circumstances indeed.

As I said, I think that perhaps the minister has to take a very much closer look at the funding provided to these organizations, if indeed he expects them to do the job that is required.

The Speaker: Before I recognize the next member, there are quite a few private conversations which are very noisy.

TORONTO WATERFRONT

Mr McCague: I have a couple of comments on the statement made by the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I am sure that the minister would want me to acknowledge the appointment of Darcy McKeough, a person who is very much respected, disagreed with from time to time, but admired for his foresight and determination. Foresight is something I hope he is able to instil into this government as a natural attribute.

The minister, it appears, has this issue in fairly good hands, more so than the member for Riverdale would wish to acknowledge. I know that with the honourable minister and Mr McKeough working together, we can expect great things on the harbourfront.

The Speaker: That completes ministerial statements and responses. I might try once again. Before I ask for oral questions, probably all the private conversations could close.

ORAL QUESTIONS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Kormos: I have a question of the Premier, just a short one. During the evening and morning of 26-27 April, we received 700 phone calls here at Queen's Park. These phone calls were from all over Ontario, and every one objected to the government's auto insurance scheme, Bill 68. Every one of them objected to the Liberals' time allocation motion.

The Premier may believe in his own special way that there has been enough debate on Bill 68, but those people phoning in—and that represents thousands and thousands and tens of

thousands of Ontarians—do not. In view of that, would the Premier please instruct his House leader to withdraw the time allocation motion so that Bill 68 can be debated as the people of Ontario want it to be debated?

1410

The Speaker: The question was, would you instruct the House leader to withdraw the time allocation motion?

An hon member: That was a no.

Mr Kormos: That answer does not particularly surprise me. The ultimate inquiry would be to investigate how the government of Ontario, the Premier of Ontario, the Liberals of Ontario, could show such disregard for the wishes of the people of Ontario. The Liberal Party of Ontario received \$152,387.50 from the insurance industry in 1987. The Liberal Party of Ontario received \$85,695 from the insurance industry in 1988. This does not include specific donations to specific candidates.

The Speaker: And the question?

Mr Kormos: That is almost \$250,000 in a two-year period from the insurance industry. Is that why this government is so beholden to that same auto insurance industry and will not permit full debate on such an important piece of legislation?

The Speaker: The question has been put.

Hon Mr Peterson: No.

Mr B. Rae: I want to ask the Premier if he can tell us why his government would be so reluctant to have a full and fair debate on a subject of such critical importance to the people of this province.

We can show that there are groups, ranging from the police association to groups representing the disabled, that believe profoundly that this bill is discriminatory, that this bill discriminates against people who have emotional disabilities and that it discriminates against many, many people who will not be receiving benefits, which is the only reason the insurance companies like it and are in favour of it. They are going to end up having to pay out less in benefits. I would like to ask the Premier if he can tell us why he is so afraid of a free and full debate on this subject.

Hon Mr Peterson: I would argue that we have had a full-some debate on this entire matter. It has gone on some 28 days. It has been in committee. It has been debated for a long period of time. Good Lord, the debates are all there. Our members have been putting forward their points of view, as have his, but to have a decent debate one has to make some sense in the debate. Frankly, they have not been making their contribution in that regard.

NON-PROFIT HOUSING

Mr B. Rae: I have a question for the Premier. He will know that the signs of a recession in the building industry are already there. Thousands of construction workers are now out of work. The projections are that in the middle of the summer there could be as many as 35,000 workers in the construction industry out of work because of the complete collapse of the home housing market in this province.

I want to ask the Premier how he could possibly condone a budget from his Treasurer that makes no mention at all of this housing crisis and makes no mention at all of the need for a new program. Why would his budget have completely failed to introduce any new measures for non-profit and affordable housing, which would not only provide housing for people who are

now homeless but would also provide jobs for those thousands of construction workers who are now out of work?

Hon Mr Peterson: I think my honourable friend is getting carried away with, shall we say, the overexuberance of some of his colleagues and is prone to more and more irrational statements all the time on some of the weighty matters of the day.

I would tell my honourable friend that the Treasurer has put forward a budget that I think is responsible in all regards. As the member knows, 10,000 non-profit units will be constructed this year from ongoing programs.

Mr Reville: Not in this budget.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Sure it is in this budget. The money is there.

Hon Mr Peterson: Sure it is.

My honourable friend has such a short-term view of life. If I were him, probably I would have the same kind of situation. But \$3 billion was put into housing in the last two budgets. Those programs are ongoing. My honourable friend speaks of the slowdown in housing, and he is right, even though the Treasury is now predicting 80,000 new starts this year. My honourable friend is aware that a lot of this has to do with the high interest rates, which are a function of the federal government's policy.

I think that for my honourable friend to stand in this House and repeat the same old line about nothing happening is just factually incorrect. He wants to make sure that when he is presenting his arguments he uses all the facts that are available.

Mr B. Rae: Let me try to bring this down to earth for the Premier and say to him that if he looks at the budget, he will find no new response in the budget to the housing crisis that is there. If the Premier wants to pick up the phone and speak to the co-op and non-profit people, he will find from them that there are literally thousands of units waiting to go. All they are waiting for is the approval and the money from the provincial government. That is what they are waiting for. Those housing units are ready, up and waiting to go. What they are waiting for is the leadership of the government in dealing with this crisis.

If the Premier wants to say that the Toronto home builders are being irresponsible, if he wants to say that the construction workers are completely inaccurate when they say that they are unemployed, well, fine, let him stand up and say that they are wrong. The fact of the matter is the housing market is crashing down, yes in part because of interest rates, but that is precisely why the provincial government has to bring in a new program in order to begin to deal with a gap that is obviously being left by the inactivity and the failures of the Tory party nationally.

Why not bring in a new program that will begin to deal with this crisis now? That is the kind of crisis it is.

Hon Mr Peterson: My honourable friend has a very short sense of history. He is not aware perhaps, and I can tell him, of the programs that have gone on in this province over the last couple of years. That is what the member does not understand. Things are put in place and they continue to operate: 10,000 units this year; the housing budget alone this year is up some 27 per cent. I am sure the member is probably not aware of this, or he would not ask the question the way he does. The housing budget is up 245 per cent since 1984-85. Those are very significant numbers.

There are ongoing programs that are working effectively and well, and I repeat to my honourable friend that the Treasurer has put \$3 billion into housing in the last little while. I could tell him about Seaton. It is going to build a substantial

number of more units. I think my honourable friend is catering to some who prefer not see reality in the situation.

Mr B. Rae: The Premier said the Treasurer has put in \$3 billion. It is not his money; he has allowed people to borrow from the Canada pension plan up to \$3 billion. Let's be accurate. The Premier wants to be accurate? Let him be accurate. They are already talking about 35,000 construction workers being unemployed this summer. That is not an invention of ours. That is a fact of life. We are looking at interest rates that are at a historic high. That is a fact of life. It is precisely at that point that every economist of the right and of the left would say that this is when government should be intervening and taking a leadership role. We have 70,000 people, including lots of kids, who are on a waiting list for affordable housing right now. Those are not fictitious people. Those are real people.

I want to ask the Premier again, why are there no new programs in his budget to deal with this current housing crisis?

Hon Mr Peterson: The member obviously chooses to overlook some of the initiatives in Seaton that will provide 34,000 units. I can tell my honourable friend that there are ongoing programs that are under way here. This housing budget is some \$640-odd million, up very substantially, and these programs are all there.

My honourable friend also speaks about the historically high interest rates, which is not correct. He will be aware that they were higher earlier in the 1980s. We know the pressures that we are dealing with. I can tell him that I think the minister and the Treasurer are dealing in a very sensitive way with these questions.

Let me say one other thing to my honourable friend in conclusion. I think what he saw from the Treasurer was an extremely responsible budget. I would not expect that he would understand or respect that kind of budget, because that is not the NDP view of the world or life. But I can tell him that the Treasurer has built in substantial flexibility to his budget to deal with whatever problems develop in the future if in fact they do. I can tell him that the Treasurer is in extremely good control of the situation and I think understands the pressures on the system better than anyone, including my friend opposite.

1420

PATRICIA STARR INQUIRY

Mr Brandt: My question as well is for the Premier and it relates to the position that was taken by the Attorney General with respect to the Houlden inquiry. The Premier will be aware that at the time the Supreme Court decision was brought down the Attorney General took the position that this would in fact impact on all other inquiries and that it would have an influence over any future inquiries that may be undertaken by the province of Ontario.

That being the case, we now have a ruling by Judge Coulter with respect to the investigation into the Niagara police force regarding certain allegations of wrongdoing in that connection, and it has been decided by the good judge that it is quite proper and appropriate for them to proceed with respect to the Coulter inquiry. On the basis of this decision that has now been brought down and is contrary, frankly, to what the Attorney General said, is the Premier prepared to reconstitute the terms of reference of the Houlden inquiry and put it back in place again?

Hon Mr Peterson: As I understand it, Judge Coulter, highly respected judge that he is, has made the decision with respect to his own inquiry. He is the hearing officer in that matter and

he has interpreted the law in the context of that particular inquiry, as he has every right to do. Someone may appeal that, someone may not—I have no idea—but that is a judgement with respect to a particular inquiry.

Mr Brandt: He also makes specific reference to the fact that in the inquiry, when comparing both the Coulter and the Houlden inquiries, in the case of the Coulter inquiry it could proceed because there were no names mentioned. It was not a narrowly based inquiry, but a broadly based inquiry, which was more general in nature. Specifically, what the judge said was exactly what both opposition parties indicated at the time the original inquiry was put in position, namely, that if it was a broadly based inquiry and did not take a narrow view such as proposed by the Attorney General, it should have been able to proceed. Judge Coulter is saying exactly what we said.

Is the Premier prepared simply to broaden the inquiry, look at a wider field of reference and draft it according to the direction laid down by both the Supreme Court of Canada and the advice being given by Judge Coulter?

Hon Mr Peterson: I appreciate that there is a difference, and the difference is that the Supreme Court of Canada has pronounced on the Houlden inquiry, and then we have the hearing officer himself pronouncing on his own inquiry. There is a profound difference. I am sure my honourable friend respects that.

Mr Brandt: With respect, I understand there is a profound difference between the two inquiries; there is not, however, a profound difference between inquiries per se. In analysing the position that was put forth by the Supreme Court of Canada, Judge Coulter has now said quite specifically that an inquiry is appropriate as long as the terms of reference are very general, broadly based and do not name individuals. On those grounds, the inquiry that was undertaken by Houlden can be undertaken with the same terms of reference as were put forward in the suggestions by Judge Coulter.

I ask the Premier again, in order to restore confidence in the system we have here in the province of Ontario, is he prepared to reconsider, do what is right and provide the necessary framework for an inquiry in Ontario?

Hon Mr Peterson: My honourable friend has his own legal opinion and I know he is a highly esteemed lawyer in these matters. I can tell him that other people—

Mr Brandt: It is Judge Coulter's.

Hon Mr Peterson: I think my honourable friend wants to be very careful when he speaks for another judge with respect to a legal interpretation. The Supreme Court of Canada has spoken on this matter. Now, the member may know more than the Supreme Court of Canada. As he knows, the Divisional Court as well as the Court of Appeal of Ontario spoke on the matter with the highest authority and came down with their judgement on the matter. The Attorney General has interpreted that, and the member feels his interpretation may be superior to that. I understand that as well. But as I understand it, that judgement also said that you cannot do indirectly what you cannot do directly. That is why the matter is proceeding as it is.

Mr Runciman: My question is for the Minister of Financial Institutions. I would like to stand down the question. I saw him leaving a few minutes ago. Hopefully he will return shortly.

The Speaker: Is it agreed for the member for Leeds-Grenville to stand down his question? Agreed.

CORPORATE TAXES

Mr Laughren: I have a question for the Treasurer on his incredible tax regime in the province of Ontario. The Treasurer should know that in 1988, Tridel Enterprises Inc had profits of \$65.9 million. They also managed to pay \$16.1 million in dividends to their shareholders, but managed to pay zero corporate taxes, absolutely zero. Also, Bramalea in 1989 had income of \$123.1 million, distributed dividends to shareholders of \$37.5 million and also paid absolutely zero income taxes because it took advantage of the difference between the capital cost allowance and depreciation.

Could the Treasurer tell us how in the world he justifies a tax system that allows those people to pay absolutely zero taxes? Why did he not introduce a minimum corporate tax in his budget?

Hon R. F. Nixon: These corporations pay a capital tax, as the honourable member knows, and whether or not they make any taxable income, the capital tax is payable. The honourable member chooses to ignore that as he repeats questions of this type day after day.

The honourable member is also aware that under the Income Tax Act for corporations of Canada, which the province parallels by our law, there are encouragements and enticements for corporations to reinvest their income in properties in the case of development corporations, and other indications of a continuation of operation that makes employment and development. Even the honourable member is not suggesting that the tax is being evaded, but I would agree with him that it is avoided.

Mr Laughren: The Treasurer knows full well that these companies are taking advantage of an accounting difference. That is why they pay absolutely zero corporate income tax—zero.

At the same time that those two big companies, Bramalea and Tridel, are paying no corporate taxes whatsoever, a single person in this province earning the minimum wage of \$5 an hour will pay \$360 in income tax to the Treasurer, and a single mother earning \$18,700 will also pay provincial income tax to the Treasurer. How in the name of heaven does the Treasurer justify a tax system that perverse?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member knows that whatever he thinks about the aims of these corporations, they do provide employment for construction workers that has given us a level of employment in this province really second to none in North America. His leader, a person to whom he might speak now and then, has expressed his concern at his most sincere, and that is very sincere indeed, that the level of employment in this regard is sagging. The only way we can make this employment is through the development industry, which has been profitable as the honourable member is aware, but much of this profit has been reinvested.

At least the honourable member will know that we are no longer paying their land tax under the farm tax reduction, which is at least a step in the right direction.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Runciman: My question is for the Minister of Financial Institutions and it concerns Bill 68. I have here a copy of a pamphlet from Law Insurance Brokers of Markham which advises its clients of changes they can expect under the government's no-fault auto insurance legislation. I will send a

copy over to the minister if I can have a page here to take it over.

For example, it cites a standard auto policy and states, "Where the driver has an income replacement plan, the insurance company would pay \$300 per week in benefits, whereas for a driver without income replacement, the company would pay \$600 a week."

If Bill 68 creates an incentive for insurance companies to insure only those with income replacement plans at their workplace, this is known, as the minister is aware, as cherry-picking. It could leave untold numbers of drivers resorting to the costly Facility Association for their insurance coverage. Will the minister tell us what steps the government is taking to ensure this does not happen?

1430

Hon Mr Elston: First of all, I should apologize. The House leader advised me that the question was coming, but I was dealing with some constituency matters for the folks of Bruce county and I apologize for being late in coming in.

With respect to this particular item, let me advise the honourable gentleman that with the introduction of Bill 68 and its passage, the Ontario Insurance Commission will have broader powers to deal with consumer-oriented insurance items, more so than the superintendent and others have had authority to deal with in the past.

On these types of practices, I have been assured, when this question was originally raised some time ago by a member here who speaks at length and with great feeling about this particular bill from time to time, earlier last year, I think probably in December, it was indicated to me by the industry that it was not looking at doing things like this at all as underwriting practices.

I take it, although not having had the time to review what this says, that in fact the material in front of me is just an indication or an example of how the insurance payments will be made under a collateral source rule which was changed in October by this House to indicate that people would not be able to collect twice on the same loss. In fact, it represents a good indication of how we want to have the insurance system fairer.

Mr Runciman: Wrong again. This pamphlet also addressed the issue of motorists having to purchase extra insurance coverage because Bill 68 limits the amount of compensation a driver can expect to receive from his insurance company. Again I quote: "Your new automobile policy may require increased coverage to properly protect you. For anyone whose gross annual income exceeds \$39,000 they may require a customized policy."

Given that the minister has bragged about an average eight per cent premium increase in urban areas, can he now tell the House how much more than eight per cent drivers will pay for extra insurance coverage?

Hon Mr Elston: What we have decided with respect to this program is that there would be what would be seen as a basic policy for pricing purposes. In fact, I was one person who has argued, and my colleagues support the idea, that a person who earns at the very lowest level, say \$200 a week, should not be forced to pay a premium which would allow some other person to collect \$1,000 or \$1,500 a week. It would be grossly unfair, in fact, to have a person at the low end of income-earning ability subsidizing the people who earn substantially more.

We made a decision originally to include the benefit at \$450 per week, tax-free, but we were shown through committee hearings and, in fact, took the initiative to change from the \$450 to

the \$600 level, although I still hold very clearly the opinion that a person who earns \$200 a week ought not to be asked to subsidize the people who would earn and receive more back on that policy. Six hundred dollars a week or \$39,000 a year seems to be a demarcation where, in fact, people will be able to make an additional purchase without asking somebody at the lower end of the income scale to subsidize those people.

Mr Runciman: The latest figures from Statistics Canada show there are approximately 450,000 Ontarians earning more than \$39,000 per year. That is a lot of customized policies.

The minister will want to know that my staff contacted the chairman designate of the insurance commission to find out how much extra coverage insurance would cost, and his response was, "That is not public information." Bill 68 affects more than six million Ontario motorists, and the head of the insurance commission says, "That is not public information."

Will the minister commit to telling the House and the public of Ontario exactly how much this extra coverage is going to cost Ontario motorists and how much higher than eight per cent the true average premium increase will be in urban areas?

Hon Mr Elston: The honourable gentleman asks a very good question. In fact, he could assist us quite reasonably, although having what are usually very helpful remarks about our current debate, if he could make those remarks none the less very briefly so that we, in fact, could allow the bill to be put in place so that we could do the work that has to be done to get all the material ready to introduce the legislation in working form in the marketplace.

We have done everything we can to try and move forward with implementation within the bounds that are acceptable when we do not have the legislative backdrop to allow us to go further. We have done preliminary work in receiving filings and we have done preliminary work in trying to set up some form work, but we cannot go forward and finalize all the logistics required to implement this system while Her Majesty's loyal opposition talks for a month at a time and prevents us from processing the legislation, while there are some timely, I am sure, but perhaps extended remarks to be heard yet from the third party.

As soon as we can, all information is going to be made public, but members should let us do our work. They should let the bill be put in place and let us get the work done.

Interjections.

The Speaker: I would not want the members to get out of rotation.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Mr Brandt: My question is to the Treasurer. The Treasurer has probably heard some of the criticisms with respect to the budget document that he brought in, namely, that the document was more a political document than an economic document, when in fact the latter, namely, an economic document, is what this province needs at this time.

The Treasurer is no doubt aware that we have had two months of contracted growth in this province and throughout the country which indicates that we have some very difficult economic times looming on the horizon. That being the case, why were the projections in his budget estimates, which are going to be required in order to balance the budget, so overly optimistic when compared with virtually every other economist, who indicates the slowdowns are going to be much more severe than he has indicated?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member knows my erudite background as well as anyone. I am not an economist. However, as Treasurer, I have at my disposal the advice of very well experienced, very well educated and disinterested—that is in the best sense—economists in the Ministry of Economics. They review this matter on a continuing basis.

The member may recall in the projections made to the House in the so-called grey paper last November-December, the projection was for real growth of two per cent during this calendar year. Naturally, they review the projections and economic indicators on a daily basis, and for the purposes of this budget exercise they reduced that projection to 1.7 per cent. Following the indications the honourable member is reflecting, they did reduce the level of real growth expected.

I am pleased to say that their projections in this regard are as good as those of any economists the honourable member may want to point to. On that basis the fiscal projections here are based on real growth of 1.7 per cent. He would see that corporate profits are not projected to grow and that certain other numbers in the budget indicate that we know that real growth is going to be minimal but, we believe, positive.

Mr Brandt: Some would suggest, and I name myself among that group, that a more stimulative budget was necessary in order to offset some of the problems we are going to experience with respect to growth. The Premier promised some time ago that he was prepared, in order to stimulate the tourist industry, to remove the five per cent accommodation tax as one method of perhaps attracting more business to this province and creating more jobs. Will the Treasurer consider, at some later point, if the slowdown is more severe than anticipated in his projections, the removal of the five per cent accommodation tax and/or some other stimulative measures that may be considered in order to create some jobs at a time when I believe they are going to be badly needed in this province?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I appreciate the references made by the honourable member. He is aware that the five per cent accommodation tax is as low as any he would find in any of the destination centres in North America, particularly those which expect to have a major share of conventions. He need only look at Los Angeles, Denver, New Orleans, New York, Chicago and Montreal, and the list is not complete at that level, to show that all of them have higher taxes than ours. I wish ours were less, but at five per cent it is competitive.

The Speaker: New question, the member for Oxford.

Mr Tatham: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. We must not waste the time of the member for Oxford.

1440

WAGE PROTECTION

Mr Tatham: My question is to the Minister of Labour and concerns the actions of this government with respect to the status of wages as a secured creditor.

A company with operations in Woodstock recently went into receivership, with its line of credit for the Bank of Nova Scotia being recalled. The ex-employees of this company attended a meeting of creditors in Toronto on 11 April. They were told that there was no obligation for anyone to answer their questions about their livelihood and their means of secure retirement. I am afraid I cannot agree. These people want to

know why their wages and pensions are not treated as secured creditor.

Can the minister answer their question? Can he tell them why their wages are not protected while the money owed to the bank is?

Hon Mr Phillips: It is a question that many members in the House are keenly interested in. While it is not a lot of comfort to the member's constituents, the matter of bankruptcy does indeed come under the federal government. It comes under the federal Bankruptcy Act. We, as a provincial government, have been urging the federal government to respond to the needs of people for wage protection under the Bankruptcy Act.

The federal government has promised reform in this area for some time. I, as the Minister of Labour, have urged them to act on it. Our Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations has also urged them to act on it. While we may not appreciate the answer, the fact is that it is a federal matter under the Bankruptcy Act and we must get the federal government to respond to this matter.

Mr Tatham: That is very interesting, but hardly surprising that this area would rest with the federal government, particularly considering the glaring lack of activity on the problem to date. I think, however, that the actions undertaken at the provincial level are at the very least a beginning and illustrate a concern for the welfare of these people. I am disappointed that the federal government of this country sees fit to protect the financial investment of the banks but not the investment of hours of work and pensions that belong to average working persons.

I would like to ask the minister, on behalf of the ex-employees of TAG, apart from what his ministry has already done on this issue, is there anything else they could look forward to in the immediate future from the minister? Have they any hope that this will change?

Mr Villeneuve: Ah, Charlie, you gave in again.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Phillips: I will just go over the things that we are doing. Our employment standards branch is working to ensure that the back wages of those individuals, if we possibly can get them, will be collected. We also are establishing an adjustment committee that will work with the affected employees to assist them in counselling and finding new jobs.

Also, as I have mentioned in the House before, our Premier's Council is looking at other ways that we may be of help to workers affected in such a way. It is not a situation we are particularly happy with, of course, seeing individuals in a circumstance like this. We will continue to urge the federal government to act on what it has been promising it will act on, and that is wage protection under the Bankruptcy Act. We will continue to act on that. In the meantime, our ministry will do everything we possibly can to assist the constituents of the member for Oxford.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN WINDSOR AREA

Mr D. S. Cooke: I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. I assume the minister is now aware that another plant closure has been announced in the Windsor-Essex area. This company is Sheller-Globe, which is owned, not by a small corporation but by United Technologies. They announced late last week that 300 jobs would be gone out of the town of Kingsville. They are an auto parts supplier.

The situation in my community is 13 per cent unemployment and growing daily with the devastation that is taking place in the auto parts sector, thanks to the free trade agreement, high interest rates and a high dollar. What is the minister prepared to do to save these jobs and to stop the erosion of jobs and the ever-increasing unemployment rate in the Windsor-Essex area?

Hon Mr Kwinter: I am sure the member realizes that none of the three factors that he just outlined, the free trade agreement, high interest rates and the exchange on the dollar, is within the purview of the provincial government. But I should tell the member that we have been looking at Windsor. We are working with various companies in that area trying to get new industry in there. We, as a government, are planning to transfer some of our jobs there. We have had various programs in conjunction with the city of Windsor, the city of Detroit, to bring in foreign investors, to make sure that we can improve the situation in that community.

Mr D. S. Cooke: It is funny that the minister here today says that free trade is not part of the government's mandate, when it went to the people in 1987 and got a mandate to stop the free trade agreement. It is good enough during an election; it is good enough to calm the voters during an election. One might say it is good enough for the Liberal Party to lie to the voters during an election but it is not good enough to do anything about the job loss that results from those kinds of promises.

I am asking the minister if he would specifically intervene in this particular plant closure at Sheller-Globe as well as the plant closure of a week ago at Welles Corp and see if there is any way we can save those jobs. The minister might know that in the Sheller-Globe instance the company is saying one of the reasons it is moving the 300 jobs to Mexico is because it would rather pay people \$1 to \$1.50 an hour. It is an issue that he has to address. Would he intervene in these two plant closures?

Hon Mr Kwinter: In any of these plant closures we try to come up with some resolution where we can be of help. If the company specifically says, "If you can do this for us, we will keep that plant in operation," we do that all the time and on a regular basis; but in other instances a corporate decision has been made and it is a decision that has been made in the context of its corporate planning. There is nothing that we can do. We cannot go to it and say, "You must change your corporate planning."

Mr D. S. Cooke: Will the minister contact them?

Hon Mr Kwinter: I would be happy to contact them; we have been in contact with them. We have to make sure that the employees who are dislocated by that move have got adequate compensation as far as severance and notice are concerned. The other thing we can do and are doing is trying to encourage other companies to establish in that area.

ZEBRA MUSSELS

Mr Cureatz: I have a question to the Minister of Energy. The increase of the infestation of zebra mussels has been brought to everyone's attention. My understanding is that at the Nanticoke generating station there is increasing concern of the possibility of this little pesky beast clogging up the intake pipes to such a degree that the station might be closed down.

What anticipated plans is she making in terms of ensuring that Ontario Hydro generating stations will not be limited in capacity for the production of electricity because of the zebra mussel infestation?

Hon Mrs McLeod: The honourable member is quite right to recognize the very serious problem that is being presented by the infestation of zebra mussels in our waters. In fact, it is a concern that has been raised on previous occasions by our colleague the member for Hastings-Peterborough.

There are a number of initiatives which we are taking within the government to co-ordinate the actions of involved ministries, because the zebra mussel does affect a number of municipal and industrial water facilities as well as those of Ontario Hydro. Specifically in relation to Ontario Hydro, the honourable member will be interested in knowing that Hydro itself has taken a very aggressive role, spending some \$4 million on research, and plans to spend some \$10 million in new technologies that will eradicate the problem of zebra mussels in their particular facilities.

Mr Cureatz: I am pleased the minister avoided referring to the Ministry of Natural Resources guideline. We are asking specifically about Ontario Hydro. My note says, "Hold up poster." So here is the poster, "Wanted: dead mussels." I have to tell the minister and the Premier, now that he has looked this way, dead is serious business, of which I have some working familiarity since the—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. That pretty well brings things to an end, and could you come to an end of your question?

Mr Cureatz: Mr Speaker, you and I were pretty close to an end Friday morning, I will tell you.

I want to ask the minister, can she assure this House that Ontario will not be close to any blackouts or brownouts because of the possibility of our generating stations being closed down because of the infestation of zebra mussels?

1450

Hon Mrs McLeod: I have already made reference to the action that Ontario Hydro itself has taken to deal with this problem, and I would acknowledge the fact that it has responded very quickly to a problem which has emerged at a very rapid rate.

I did not specifically mention the work of the Ministry of Natural Resources because the member was asking his earlier question more directly about Ontario Hydro, but what I would want to assure the honourable member is that we are trying to deal with what is a very serious problem indeed by bringing together different ministries that do have an involvement to deal with the issue, not just as it affects Ontario Hydro but as it does affect other municipal and industrial water facilities and also our fisheries, with all the corresponding economic and tourism impacts of that impact.

We do have an interministerial committee, chaired by my parliamentary assistant, so I will make reference to that. It does involve the Ministry of the Environment as well as the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation, and we are looking at international research and how we can develop environmentally acceptable methods of control.

POLICE SERVICES

Mr Miller: My question is to the Solicitor General. As the Solicitor General will know, Bill 107, the Police Services Act, proposes that all municipalities that maintain a police force will be responsible for the establishment of a municipal police services board. Under the present Police Act municipalities with a population of less than 15,000 are now required to establish a

board. Why does the Solicitor General want every municipality that maintains a police force to establish an independent police services board?

Hon Mr Offer: I think the honourable member properly characterizes the existing act and its requirements and the proposed legislation and its new requirements.

Under the Police Services Act we have set out to strengthen the role of the police services board. The proposed act is guided by the principle of an enhanced level of interaction between the police and the community and to make our police services more reflective of the community they serve. This will be accomplished through the new Police Services Act by making it mandatory that there be a municipal services board throughout the province.

It is my belief that the existing police commissions throughout the province provide a vital link between the community and the police, and through the expansion of these boards, by making them mandatory in every area where there is a municipal and/or regional police force, we expect that the municipalities will expand and enhance this very important link.

Mr Miller: I would also like to ask the Solicitor General why he seeks to have the province appoint the chairperson of the local police commission instead of maintaining the present system where the chair is elected by the members of the board.

Hon Mr Offer: The honourable member brings up an issue which has been brought to my attention. In every police services board, the chairman serves an important function in dealing with the interaction, as a member of the board and a chairperson, and the function that the board provides as a link between the community and the police services board.

Currently, we are looking at that particular aspect of the legislation, the requirement that the chairperson be appointed by the province. I expect and hope that after second reading this matter will be referred to committee for hearing so that we may talk to that particular issue in greater detail, but I certainly do understand and acknowledge the issue as brought forward by the honourable member and it is one which I certainly want to continue the discussion and the dialogue on to further determine the concerns that have been raised in dealing with this one issue.

TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Mrs Grier: My question is for the Minister of the Environment and it concerns a company called Barg Transport International, which tomorrow plans to begin transporting dangerous chemicals by barge across the Detroit River from Detroit to Windsor.

On 5 April, the Minister of the Environment was quoted in the Windsor Star as saying that he was seeking cabinet approval for an environmental assessment because part of the land where the barge will be landing in Windsor falls under his jurisdiction. Last week, a spokesman for the company claimed, "No level of Canadian government could stop the barge from operating by the end of the month."

It is the end of the month. Can the minister tell us why he has not announced an environmental assessment of this dangerous project?

Hon Mr Bradley: As the member may be aware, this is a matter of some split jurisdiction, and I have—

Mr Reville: The mussels are in charge.

Hon Mr Bradley: Before the member for Riverdale moans and groans about this, I have indicated that Ontario will place under environmental assessment any component of this particular proposal that it is possible to put under the Environmental Assessment Act.

Apparently, some communications have taken place between the Ontario government and the government of Canada on this, as international waterways come under the jurisdiction of the federal government, and we are attempting to assess on an environmental basis any component at all that we could find that would be of a provincial nature and I have given that particular commitment. The government of Ontario will have no problem with that, but we do hope as well that we can convince the federal government to have an environmental assessment, perhaps, of those areas which are under federal jurisdiction.

Mrs Grier: I suspected that he would find that there was some federal responsibility rather than his responsibility. My hope had been that this minister would announce an environmental assessment of the portions that come under his control, rather than waiting for his federal cousins, but in anticipation of his answer, we talked to Ottawa today. The information we got back from the Department of National Revenue, under whose jurisdiction this project falls, is that it has asked for input from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and has not yet received anything back from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.

I do not know to whom the minister is communicating, but can he explain why he is allegedly communicating with someone who says they have not heard from him and why he has not publicly announced that he has an order in council that says there will be a provincial environmental assessment?

Hon Mr Bradley: Before the member gets—

Mr Reville: Speak up, Jim.

Hon Mr Bradley: Before the other member as well gets up on his high horse about this, we have been the only game in town on this, the feds have been nowhere to be found, but we would be pleased to have the federal government use its powers in the area over which it has jurisdiction. Obviously, we deal with our counterpart ministry. We do not deal with the Department of National Revenue; we deal with our counterpart ministry when we are dealing with the federal government.

I am the one who has announced that we are placing under environmental assessment any component that is a provincial component. Clearly, any objective observer who would look at this would say overwhelmingly it is within federal jurisdiction but, despite this, I have stated that the provincial government is prepared to place under environmental assessment any component that is in provincial jurisdiction.

Mrs Marland: My question is to the Minister of Health—
Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. My main concern is to try to allow people to ask questions.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH SERVICES

Mrs Marland: My question is to the Minister of Health. It is about a case she is fully familiar with. It concerns a two-year-old girl who has a port-wine-stain birthmark over 75 per cent of her face, one arm, one leg and much of her torso and she requires a tunable pulse dye laser treatment, which really makes a difference in the condition of this child. She needs the treatment twice a month.

The treatment is very expensive and it has only been available in two locations in Ontario. Unfortunately, one location is a clinic in Ottawa and it has been shut down because under Bill 147 the doctor could not get a licence from the Ministry of Health to operate. The treatment had been taking place at this clinic in Ottawa at the expense of the parents until it was shut down. Now negotiations are under way for this child to have the treatment in Montreal and at the cost of OHIP, but still the family will have to pay the travel expenses.

The Speaker: And the question could be?

Mrs Marland: My question to the minister is this: Given that a laser machine is available in Toronto and that a doctor wants to offer the treatment in Ottawa, does the minister really think it is acceptable that this child should have to be treated out-of-province and her family pay the travel expenses?

1500

Hon Mrs Caplan: I would say to the member, I am very aware of this particular case. This is an example of new and emerging technologies that are allowing new procedures to be provided in alternative ways and that in fact is what the Independent Health Facilities Act is about. The clinic that she mentions is not eligible for grandfathering under that legislation because it started operation after the date of the tabling of that legislation, fully aware of the legislation. She should know that the ministry has begun a process to consider requests for proposals which will license practitioners to provide pulse dye laser services in Ontario.

Mrs Marland: The fact remains that, whether this clinic is eligible for grandfathering or not, we are playing with a child and that child's future and having an opportunity for a normal life. Every week that she does not have access to this treatment for this birthmark, the birthmark grows, as do the other parts of the body that are affected.

I think it is time that we stop playing around with the future of children's health care in this province.

The Speaker: Is that your question?

Mrs Marland: I am going to ask the minister once more: Instead of going through the technicalities of what is eligible for grandfathering and what is not, and instead of wasting the taxpayers' money sending this child to Montreal or Edmonton for treatment—

The Speaker: Question?

Mrs Marland: My question is, will this minister agree to let this child access the two machines that are available today in Ontario for this treatment?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I would say to the member opposite that this particular treatment is an insured service only when medically necessary and not for cosmetic purposes. In the interim, as we go out with a request for proposal to have the services provided in Ontario, the ministry will ensure that patients continue to receive the treatment. Access may be provided through the Hospital for Sick Children, which began service in January 1990, and if that is not available, then with prior approval from the ministry, funding will be provided for medical causes associated with the provision of this treatment outside of Ontario.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr D. R. Cooke: My question is for the Minister of Labour. I mentioned in the House a week or so ago that in March 1987, a serious chemical fire occurred at Horticultural

Technologies in Kitchener. Emergency service personnel fought the blaze for more than an hour before the plant manager arrived to tell them what was inside.

As I previously reported to the House, of 69 firefighters and 16 policemen involved in the fire, one has since died of cancer and more than a dozen others were seriously ill with kidney, liver or gall bladder problems. I regret to report to the House that, since that time, the president of the Kitchener firefighters' association has also succumbed to cancer.

Firefighters and police are worried that illnesses are perhaps more than coincidental. I am wondering if the minister can assure the residents of Kitchener that an investigation is being launched into the circumstances surrounding this tragic fire and assuage our fears.

Hon Mr Phillips: I appreciate this is a matter of intense interest to the residents of Kitchener and to the member and of course to the firefighters and the police involved, and I want to assure the member and the members of the House that we indeed are in the process now of a full investigation. It will be conducted by our health and safety services branch.

I think of particular importance to the member is that we will involve both the firefighters' association and the firefighters' management. As well, if the police are also involved in it, we would be happy to involve them so they are aware of the exact procedure that we will follow, of the investigation that we will follow, and that each step of the way they understand what is happening and have input and participation in that so at the end of the study they feel comforted that there has been a full investigation, they are aware of the circumstances and they understand and have been part of the results.

Mr D. R. Cooke: I was at the beginning of a meeting that occurred and was continuing on into this question period at the minister's occupational health and safety branch. There were representatives there from our fire department, our firefighters' association, our police association and our police chief. I got the feeling that there was a good sense of rapport between officials from occupational health and safety and the people involved.

I want the minister's assurance, if we can have it, that the investigation will be exhaustive and that no stone will be left unturned in attempting to determine whether or not there is a correlation and to try to prevent this sort of situation from recurring.

Hon Mr Phillips: I would like to provide that assurance. In circumstances like this, it is extremely sensitive for the people involved and is obviously of utmost urgency, and yet these studies often take some time because we are dealing with the need to look thoroughly at the medical background of the people involved.

The two assurances I can give the member are that it will be thorough and that they will be involved at each step of the way so that they understand, as I said before, the process we are following and they feel they have been part of it and they will be able to understand the results and feel comforted that there has been a thorough investigation that they have some confidence in. So those two assurances I would be happy to provide the member and, through him, the fire and police departments in Kitchener.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr Wildman: I have a question of the Treasurer re the announcement in the budget of a \$48-million program to help to lower interest rates for farmers in this province. Given that

the Conference Board of Canada, as well as other economic analysts, believes that high interest rates will last in this country beyond the end of this year, probably two to three years, can the Treasurer explain why the farm interest rate reduction program is slated to last only one year?

Hon R. F. Nixon: We thought it was reasonable to make an announcement of \$48 million that would be available this year. The Minister of Agriculture and Food will be making a detailed announcement of how that money is to be spent, what the formula will be and how it will benefit farmers who have been particularly stressed by the unexpected high level of interest rates at the present time.

Mr Wildman: Given that for every additional point of interest on the prime rate, approximately \$9 million extra in interest costs are facing the agricultural sector in this province, can the minister explain how much this will work out to for most farmers who are having to face high interest rates in Ontario?

Hon R. F. Nixon: No, I cannot, but I think he would be aware, from his personal knowledge in this important matter, that many farmers are still coping with these matters in a reasonably successful way.

The member will notice also that the comment in the budget invites the federal Minister of Agriculture to match that amount of \$48 million. He has indicated he is allocating \$500 million to support new provincial programs in support of farm requirements. Having read very carefully all his comments, I feel that he tends to focus that money in western Canada, but this is a new program. It is specifically designed to meet special requirements for farmers, particularly as they meet the problems associated with high interest rates, totally a federal responsibility. This is a clear instance where the money should be matched dollar for dollar from the federal Treasury.

1510

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

CITY OF BRAMPTON ACT, 1990

Mr Callahan moved first reading of Bill Pr43, An Act respecting the city of Brampton.

Motion agreed to.

SILAYAN FILIPINO COMMUNITY CENTRE ACT, 1990

Mr Velshi moved first reading of Bill Pr72, An Act to revive Silayan Filipino Community Centre.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUDGET DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the amendment to the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Hon Mr Ward: Through prior agreement, the official response of the third party was to be given today. I would suggest that notwithstanding the rotation that is currently under way, we now hear from the leader of the third party.

Mr D. S. Cooke: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: There certainly has been a prior agreement, but I would like to raise

one concern. Last week, when we started going into the rotation, I raised with you, Mr Speaker, and with the House leader for the government that the Conservative Party had stood down its official response and therefore, in my view, the next person in the rotation was from the Liberal Party, since the official response from the Conservative Party was being stood down. You and the government House leader said that that was inappropriate.

In order to make sure that one party does not get an additional place in the rotation, I would suggest, and I am sure the Conservatives would agree, that, as we go around in the rotation, the next time round the Conservatives should miss one spot on the rotation; otherwise, at the end they will have received an additional speaker compared to the other two parties.

The Speaker: As I recall the other day, I made the decision because I felt that the standing order said that the first two speakers in the opposition parties would be allowed to speak in that order. I did go around in rotation. The request now is that the member for Sarnia have the opportunity to speak; in other words, missing the official opposition. The request has been made by the House leader of the official opposition that in the next round the Conservative Party miss a speaker. If there is unanimous consent, I am always agreeable to do what the House wishes.

Hon Mr Ward: I do not want to complicate the issue. I am sure a determination can be made to ensure, as the House leader for the official opposition says, that no one gets an extra round. I would want to point out, though, that the last speaker on Thursday has not concluded his remarks, and the rotation, I expect, would go to him following the leader of the third party and continue so that no one gets an advantage.

Mr McCague: This seems a very complicated subject. We all know what a congenial person our leader is. He has suggested that the NDP proceed.

The Speaker: I take it, therefore, there is not unanimous consent, so I will recognize a member for the official opposition, unless the member for Willowdale wishes to continue.

Mr Matrundola: It is indeed a pleasure to resume my comments, my speech, on the budget.

This budget, as I said, is about challenge. It has been a challenge, I am sure, for the Treasurer to give to Ontarians when he has so much less federal assistance. It would have been so easy to explain our cut programs by pointing to cut transfer payments. It would have been easy for our Treasurer to seek new taxes by revealing lost federal revenues. These answers would not have faced up to the challenge, and Willowdale would not have benefited.

Instead, we have been given a balanced budget; instead, we have seen yet another consecutive year of economic growth; instead, we have an operating surplus of \$3.2 billion. That is meeting the challenge.

There are so many items in this budget which I believe please the people of Ontario. I think our able Treasurer believes in what Henry Ford once said when he was building his car and people were telling him that he would never be able to build that car, and even if he did people would not be able to afford it. Henry Ford replied, "Think that you can or think that you can't, either way you'll be right, either way." The Treasurer told us that he could and he did it. He gave us a balanced budget and a surplus as well.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to tell you a 10-word phrase, each word containing only two letters, "If it is to be, it is up to me." I believe this was the attitude of our Treasurer when he set out to balance the budget. He knew it was up to him and he did it.

As I said earlier, the riding of Willowdale is well served by this budget. It is a riding of rather upper-middle-class people, with many professionals and business people, a riding which is so rich and diverse in population and heritage that it is rather difficult to sum up. As I said in this House in response to a previous budget, Willowdale is a unique area. Its people and the issues, however, are not unique. The problems facing all of this province face Willowdale; likewise, the solutions posed by the Ontario government for all of the province apply to Willowdale as well.

This 1990 Ontario budget is more than a good news budget. It is, as a matter of fact, a great news budget, and I am sure the people of Willowdale will be very pleased to hear the great news.

I would like to close by recalling our activities on Sunday 22 April, Earth Day. Earth Day is supposed to be something to remind us that we have an environment and we must work to save our environment. Unfortunately, all too many of us forget the message as soon as the day passes. This budget shows that Ontario's government remains concerned. It considers protecting and preserving our natural environment as one of its key priorities. Funding for the Ministry of the Environment is being increased; not just a little, but by 22 per cent over last year. That is a major facing-up to a challenge, a challenge that few of us are really doing very much about.

1520

As I said at the beginning, I am proud to be able to stand here today in this Legislature and contribute to the process of government. I am made even prouder when I see the solutions presented in this budget, especially towards the problems we all face with our environment. It is just that—our environment. And our provincial government is indeed working towards making that environment a better place.

On behalf of the citizens of Willowdale, I wish to commend this Liberal government for presenting a balanced view and a balanced budget that all of the people of Ontario can be justifiably pleased with.

I wish to remind everyone that we were elected to serve, to serve the people of our respective ridings and the people of Ontario as a whole, and we must never lose sight of ourselves, our responsibilities and our sense of direction. We must continuously maintain and earn the trust and confidence of the people we represent and render to them quick, efficient and caring service, because the service we render is the rent we pay for the space we occupy.

It has been a privilege to participate in this budget debate.

Mr Charlton: I will stand down for the leader of the third party on the understanding that I will pick up the rotation when he is finished.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there agreement to this?

Agreed to.

Mr Brandt: To my colleague the member for Hamilton Mountain, I appreciate his allowing me to proceed in this order. I appreciate also the members of the House, in my absence last week, allowing me to take my opportunity in rotation today to respond to the budget that was brought in by the Treasurer.

I am also pleased to have an opportunity to perhaps share some thoughts with the Treasurer and the members of the Legislative Assembly with respect to some of, I guess, my reflections, my views and maybe even some helpful suggestions that I might have in connection with the budget.

A budget, I think, reflects a great deal about the government that brings that budget in and places it before us here in the Legislative Assembly. One of the things I look for in a budget, as an example, is whether or not the projections in the budget are in fact realistic, because those projections have got to be based on sound, economic principles.

Also, I think it is only reasonable to say that, in connection with any forecasting done by the government, it has to take into account as well what the community generally, outside of government, is saying about the period of time that we face in the near future, the next 12-month period.

So I looked at what the Treasurer had to say in connection with his projections, and I have to say that I have some serious concerns, as I indicated in question period today, as to the authenticity and the accuracy of the Treasurer's numbers.

As well, the second thing that I look for in a budget that is brought in and placed before this House is the entire question of the vision that the government has in terms of where it wants to see the province go in the future. There are really only two documents that we can deal with in this Assembly that give us some hint, some idea, some suggestion of where the government may wish to head in connection with the coming 12 months and beyond.

One of those, of course, is the throne speech, and for reasons that are best known to this government and to the present Premier, the decision was made that a throne speech would in fact not be read before the House this year. When I found that to be the decision of the government, I quickly came to the conclusion that there would be some projections that would be in the budget that would give us a kind of quasi-throne speech, a sort of document that would at least give us a road map as to where the government was going to go. I want to talk during the course of my remarks as it relates to this vision of the future that I see in this particular budget.

There is no question that every budget brought in by a Treasurer is built upon the foundation of all other budgets that have been brought in by that Treasurer, and he or she inherits the past budgets and the strength or the lack of strength of the economic performance of the jurisdiction that he or she represents, in this case the province of Ontario. But this Treasurer in particular is without question building upon the foundation of other budgets that he has drafted and placed before the Legislature. We had a former Liberal member speak very fondly and very supportively about the fact that this is an excellent—his words—Liberal budget brought in by the Treasurer.

I hope during the course of my remarks, without being overly negative—because it is the role of the opposition, obviously, to oppose, but I like to do that in a constructive way if I can, and I do believe that there are some elements of this budget that cause me concern with respect to the projections and with respect to the kind of road map that we have for the future that the Treasurer has proposed as a form of combination throne speech and budget that we are dealing with this afternoon. So the five previous budgets that were brought in by the Treasurer of this province also provide part of the foundation of this particular budget. Let me analyse for a moment how realistic those projections are.

The Treasurer has quite accurately, I think, forecast a considerable slowdown in the economy. I might take issue with

him over how quickly that is going to occur or how rapidly that slowdown is going to set in. Certainly there are many voices that are not political in nature but representing major financial institutions, economists, which have voiced their concern about the economy, which indicate that rather rapidly we are going into some very difficult times.

The Treasurer has projected in his budget a 1.7 per cent rate of growth. He has projected that jobs will fall by about 23,000 over the number of jobs created in the last fiscal year; namely, some 87,000. So he anticipates that there will be a lower rate of growth, a slowed-down rate of growth; however, still a modest amount of additional growth.

Second, he has indicated that there will be a rather significant slowdown in the number of jobs created, which will obviously result in the realities of the level of unemployment increasing by about half a per cent. So there will be many more thousands of people who will be unemployed as a result of the slowdown in the economy, and that is, I think, rather accurately forecast in the Treasurer's budget.

1530

What I take exception to, and where I think we are going to have some difficulties as this next 12-month period unfolds, is that I believe the Treasurer's projections are far rosier than those of others who have spoken on this particular period of time that we are in, in terms of the Ontario economy. Not only did the number of housing starts fall rather dramatically right across Canada, but, for the first time in many years, the worst reduction, the most significant, the most dramatic decline in housing starts anywhere in the country is occurring right here in the province of Ontario.

That is a rather serious matter of concern which I think gives the minister some indication of how quickly and how rapidly a very tough economic period can set in. Of the 12 major cities in Canada that experienced significant drops in housing, eight of them, two thirds of them, were right here in the province of Ontario. I think that is an indication, a very clear signal, that we have some problems on the horizon.

What does that mean in terms of provincial revenues in this vaunted balanced budget that we keep hearing about from those voices on the other side? First of all, with the reduction in the number of housing sales and housing starts that ultimately relate to those housing sales, there is going to be a significant reduction in the revenues that will go into the pockets of the Treasurer. I do not believe that his budget truly reflects in any accurate sense the kind of real reduction that is going to occur in just that one category of his budget alone.

Corporate profits have plunged by about 26 per cent in Ontario. That particular reduction in corporate profits, I might add, came at a time when the economy was somewhat more buoyant than the period that we are heading into. In other words, there is a rougher road ahead.

It has been said by some of my colleagues and repeated by other spokesmen many times that in fact it is relatively easy to govern during good economic times. When we have revenues pouring in, when the economy is buoyant, when there is a positive feeling among the people of this province and of this country, then it is a good time to be governing.

It takes an entirely different application of rules to govern during the tough times. The Treasurer has to make some really difficult decisions, and I would suggest to him, with respect, that he has not made those tough decisions in this budget. He has ignored them. Business as usual is his approach. "Don't worry, be happy," is the byword that is used in this budget.

Everything will unfold according to the kind of story line that has been developed on the other side of the House, and no one need be overly concerned about the tough period coming ahead.

I do not want to be someone who is going to give the Treasurer a series of words about doom and gloom, but I can tell him that all one has to do is read reports from the business community. The Ernst and Young economic bulletin talks about business conditions. Those business conditions do not look good. All the trend lines are down. The headline in today's Toronto Star indicates very clearly that we are in for a difficult economic period.

What does that mean? In my view it means, when we look at those numbers seriously, that the Treasurer has been overly optimistic, that he has not been realistic in his projections and that we are going to not only be unable to achieve a balanced budget but also have some very serious difficulties in holding the line with respect to the growing deficit.

Let me talk about the spending in this budget in a period when government programs have to be analysed and weighed very carefully because of their impact on the provincial economy. The Treasurer, who has consistently spent at double the rate of inflation, somewhere in the range of 10 per cent when the rate of inflation was about five per cent, now comes up with what he calls a restraint budget.

A restraint budget in Liberal terms means you slow down the rate of government spending. You do not stop it; you do not hold the line; but you slow it down. Is it still in fact above the rate of inflation? Is it above the kind of increases that people are receiving in wages in their own pockets? Is it in fact inflationary in that the government is extracting more and more money from the pockets of taxpayers?

You bet your boots it is, because once again, even projecting an extremely slow-growth period, the Treasurer has very optimistically put forward another seven per cent increase. That is 10 per cent on 10 per cent on 10 per cent, compounded on 10 per cent again and again and now, for the first time, we have a restraint budget showing only a seven per cent increase.

What is so bad about that? The Treasurer has said to us today, during the course of the discussion in question period, that he is not an economist, but he says that he seeks out and receives advice from the best economic minds the Treasurer's ministry can hire. I have great respect for those people who are on that staff and for the projections that they normally bring forward, but I can tell members that this political budget—because it is not an economic budget, not a budget which recognizes the economic realities of 1990—is a budget which was put in place with the singular purpose of paving the road towards an election call when it is to the advantage of this Premier and this government. It has no consideration whatever for the economic needs of the people of Ontario. That is the reality.

I have problems with that kind of a budget because a seven per cent budget, as I said, coming on the heels of all these 10 per cent increases, has extracted more and more money from the pockets of the taxpayers of this province. Do members know that, having moved from being one of the lowest provinces in per capita taxation when the present government took over, we are already in second place, the second highest taxed province per capita in the country?

We are the richest province. We are the province with the greatest resources, with the largest and most significant industrial infrastructure in all of Canada. Yet we are taxing our people to the point where you now have to work until well into

July to pay your taxes in Ontario, fully weeks and in some instances a month or more longer than in other jurisdictions.

That is just not right. As any economist worth his salt will tell you, one of the ways that you can stimulate a local economy is by leaving more money in the taxpayers' pockets. If you leave them some money, they will spend it. But if you keep taking the money out of the taxpayers' pockets, if you continue to remove it through this attitude that only the government can stimulate the economy through spending—people who go out and work hard to earn a living and to take some money home deserve to have some of that money left in their own pockets.

How many tax increases have we had in Ontario in the last four or five years? We have had 34 tax increases. No other jurisdiction anywhere in the country has had that level of increase; not only the percentages, but the number of taxes.

Mr Pollock: How many?

Mr Brandt: Thirty-four taxes, if members can believe that, have been increased over the past four or five years. All of a sudden, consumer spending starts to go down. Are we selling as many automobiles as we were a couple of years ago? No. Are we selling as many houses as we were a couple of years ago? No. Are consumer sales down? Yes, right across the entire province. Why? Because there is no money left. There is no money left in the economy to spend on some of these necessities because that money has already been extracted.

I just think it is wrong. I think it is wrong when one looks at the way in which this government has proceeded to raise tax after tax after tax. The Treasurer talks about the impact of the federal GST. Our party provincially is not overly enamoured with the present proposals in regard to the GST either, and we have called upon the Treasurer to find a way to work co-operatively with the federal government to drive the number down to a more realistic level.

How can that be done? Number one, by not increasing the size of the bureaucracy. If you have people out there collecting taxes and then somebody else walking in the door the minute those people leave to collect even more taxes, the cost of that bureaucratic administrative foot shuffling goes up rather dramatically. We could find a way to give the poor, overburdened taxpayer a little bit of a break if we administered this tax in a more realistic and sensible fashion, but we are not going to do that obviously.

Politically it makes sense for this Treasurer to distance himself from what is an unpopular tax. Well, all taxes are unpopular, and I am going to point out a few unpopular provincial taxes in just a few moments. I want to talk in terms that I hope will assist some of the members opposite to see why our concerns are so deeply founded with respect to the whole question of a balanced budget. Has the Treasurer in fact brought in a balanced budget in 1990?

Some hon members: No.

1540

Mr Brandt: No, he has not. My colleagues unanimously, if I counted all of the voices correctly, said no. He did not bring in a balanced budget. Where did he go wrong, and perhaps inadvertently, because I know that he would do this in an honest and forthright and a kind of a Brantfordite approach in terms of not attempting to mislead the people of Ontario?

But let me give the Treasurer a couple of items that concern me in the budget. There are about \$800 million in preflow payments that go back as far as two years ago. He talks about creative bookkeeping. He talks about using numbers—

Hon R. F. Nixon: What about smoke and mirrors?

Mr Brandt: Smoke and mirrors, as suggested by the Treasurer, is something that I can relate to as being a part of this budget. Yes, there are some approaches towards the whole method of using smoke and mirrors to put it over the taxpayer in this budget: \$800 million pre-paid because of some windfalls in part that came to the Treasurer by the federal government, as he will recall. Because he got that money up to a couple of years ago, he has conveniently rolled that money into this budget.

Wow, what an approach. That is creative bookkeeping of the first order. Another thing that he has done, in order to balance this year's budget, is first of all set the position that there will only be a bad tax increase—that bad tax being the sin tax and that sin tax being the tobacco tax—and that will be the only tax increase that the people of Ontario are going to have to experience in this fiscal year.

We have, I guess, rather innocently overlooked some of the most notorious, some of the largest, some of the most oppressive, some of the most unacceptable tax increases in the history of this province when he brought all—

Mr Cureatz: Let's hear them.

Mr Brandt: My friends in the Conservative Party want to know what those tax increases are. Let me just tell them those that I can think of off the top of my head. There are many, but I will only share a few with them.

We have the personal income tax which of course is operative as of 1 January 1990. But the Treasurer says that is not a 1990 tax. That was a 1989 tax, a 1989 tax introduced to be operative as of 1 January 1990. I call that a 1990 tax; that is a 1990 tax.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Your income tax is one of the lowest in Canada, third lowest in Canada.

Mr Brandt: I am glad the Treasurer said that. He says it is the third lowest in Canada, the personal income tax. I want to tell the Treasurer a little secret. When he took over as Treasurer it was the lowest in Canada, not the third lowest. It was the lowest in the entire country as a stimulant to consumer spending in this province. That is only one tax.

Mr Harris: That is only one tax. There were others, weren't there?

Mr Brandt: Oh, many others. I do not have time in the limited number of hours that I have this afternoon to go through all of these taxes. I am going to go through a number of them, though, because I do not want to disappoint my colleagues, many of whom wish to have their memories refreshed with respect to some of these taxes.

Another one that I want to bring to attention of the Treasurer was introduced in 1989, but when does it become operative? In 1990, 1 January. That is the fuel tax. We wonder why tourism is falling off at a dramatic rate in the province of Ontario. My colleagues in caucus and in the corridors and as they speak to me in my office say, "What can we do to help the province of Ontario stimulate tourism?" Do you know what the Conservative approach to stimulating tourism is, Mr Speaker? You reduce taxes. What you do is bring the tax rate down.

The Premier of this province said: "Well, we are going to reduce the five per cent accommodation tax. In that way, we will offer an inducement for people to come into Ontario and to spend their hard-earned tourist dollars in our province." Did they do that? No. What they did was increase liquor taxes,

increase sales taxes, increase tobacco taxes, increase every single tax one could think of.

Then they said, "How come the tourists are no longer flocking to this most beautiful of all provinces?" Because we have priced ourselves out of business.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Because the Tories in Ottawa screwed up the level of the Canadian dollar.

Mr Brandt: The Tories in Ottawa have not introduced the tax that the Treasurer seems to be so concerned about. The reduction in tourist activity occurred fully a year or two years prior to the introduction of another tax that he wishes to talk about. I am talking about his taxes and what he has done.

The Treasurer has introduced all of these taxes and he has of course been able to acquire a very substantial increase in the amount of revenue that the government has been able to pull in. It has been literally billions of dollars. In the past five years alone, the provincial Treasurer's reach into the taxpayer's pocket has been so extensive that his revenues have more than doubled. That is just as a result of his tax increases.

The problem with the Treasurer's calculations as they relate to this is that when you look at any other province—and there are nine other provinces you can make comparisons with—when you look at the federal government, not one other jurisdiction has increased its spending as rapidly as this Treasurer and this government. They can say what they like. The fact of the matter is that they are helping to spend us into a recession.

Second, by their prolifically high level of spending, they are causing and aggravating an inflationary trend, which is the very reason that we have a high Canadian dollar, high interest rates and an inflationary level which is totally unacceptable to anyone.

This problem is one that is not addressed in this budget at all. At a time when this country and this province in particular badly need some stimulus in order to keep job growth and economic growth on track, what we have is more and more money being extracted from the economy, and I say that is wrong.

Mr Harris: Why does Nixon keep calling Crow and telling him to keep the interest rates high? I don't understand that.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Brandt: I heard an interjection. I am not sure where it was from.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Brandt: Let me talk about a tax which is particularly troublesome, and again a tax which was introduced—

Mr Harris: Another inflationary one?

Mr Brandt: This is another inflationary tax. It is another tax which the Treasurer did not put in this particular budget, because of course he wants to have an election budget that he can go to the people with rather than an economic budget, which this province needs at the present time.

But back in 1989, when the Treasurer brought in last year's budget, and I indicated at the outset of my remarks that in fact this budget is the outgrowth of other budgets that were brought in by the Treasurer in years past—you have to build on a foundation—he started to construct a foundation for a new tax never before heard of in this province, a tax that was going to replace the Ontario health insurance plan tax. Do the members remember that one?

Mr Eves: He never said he was going to replace it. He said he was going to eliminate it.

1550

Mr Brandt: OHIP was going to be eliminated by this Treasurer, and as a result of the elimination of that particular program there would be another program brought in. Our party, to the best of my knowledge, is the only one that has spoken out against it strongly of all the parties in this House, and that is the new employer health levy.

This is a bad tax even in good times, but I tell members that when you have bad times, when you have a tough economic period, here is the very tax that will become the most severe, the most critical killer of jobs of any tax introduced by this Treasurer.

I want to tell members why. Is this a tax on profits? No. Is it a tax on growth or is it a tax on any kind of net gains in our economy? No. Do members know what it is a tax on? I think even my friends in the New Democratic Party will agree on this. This is a tax on jobs. It is a tax on jobs. You take the sum total of the payroll of a given company, add up what everybody receives and you tax that.

I say to my good friend the member from Brampton, what happens when you hire another employee or two or three? What happens is that your tax goes up. The more people you hire, the more tax you pay. What kind of an incentive is this if you are trying to build a vigorous economy? It is the most nonsensical move that I have ever heard of.

What does an employer do? An employer looks at his costs, looks carefully at what he can afford and says the only way—if members think this is a figment of my imagination, they should talk to some of the employers in their own ridings. If they have 15 or 20 or 25 people on staff, they say, "In order to offset the introduction of this new two per cent that the Treasurer is going to charge me for the employer health levy, I will tell you what I am going to do." As a businessman, he has one fundamental instinct and that is financial survival. He has to survive financially because nobody else is going to help him. So he takes a look at his costs and he says, "I can reduce my costs in order to offset this two per cent by letting somebody go, by cutting a job or two jobs out," by rationalizing employment, if you will, in that particular company. What happens is that we lose jobs as a result of the employer health levy.

It does not help one single bit to have that tax there if you are trying to overcome unemployment, if you are trying to reduce the number of people who are looking for jobs and if you are trying to stimulate the economy. It is absolutely the wrong way to go.

By the way, the tax was so badly introduced. Do members know that some of the wealthiest professionals in our entire province do not pay? How fair can that be when somebody who makes \$100,000 or \$200,000 a year pays zero under this government, when in fact a small employer perhaps—listen to this one: You can have a net loss, you can have a construction company in Niagara Falls operating close to the wire, operating right on the fine edge with very little profit, and what happens? The application of this two per cent on top of its payroll could drive it into a deficit position. It is absolutely, exactly what happens.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Nonsense. Less than one per cent.

Mr Brandt: The Treasurer says it is nonsense and he says it is one per cent.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Less than that.

Mr Brandt: He is right. It is a little less than one per cent up to \$400,000.

Hon R. F. Nixon: You were talking about an old construction guy in—

Mr Brandt: In Niagara Falls.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Brandt: I want to suggest to the Treasurer that there are some big construction guys in Niagara Falls too. I know of them. Some of them are close friends of mine who reside in that community. Does the Treasurer want to know what they are saying to me? They are saying that this tax will cause two things to happen: first, a slowdown of new employment, because they will not hire people since they simply have to pay taxes for those people when they come on staff; second, if business gets bad, they are going to have to cut back on the number of employees they have, because that is the only way in which they can meet the additional cost of either one or two per cent.

I do not think, quite frankly, that the Treasurer has balanced the budget in order to come to this point and put before the people of Ontario a document which suggests not only that he is going to balance the budget, but that he is going to—I think he has referred to this as deficit reduction—actually reduce the deficit.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Debt.

Mr Brandt: All right, the debt reduction that the Treasurer is talking about. What has happened—

Mr Callahan: First time in the history of the province.

Mr Brandt: The member for Brampton South, whom we can always count upon to make some remark with respect to matters pertaining to the business of this House, has indicated that for the first time in history—

Mr Callahan: Well, 42 years.

Mr Brandt: Oh, now he qualifies that to say 42 years—there is going to be a net reduction in the debt. Well, is that not just ducky.

During the term of office of this Treasurer, the debt, during a period of unprecedented growth, has accelerated and grown more rapidly than at any time in the history of the province of Ontario, namely, \$10 billion. Here we have unprecedented taxation, unprecedented new revenues. We have a period of time when the Treasurer should get on his knees and kiss the very ground that the consumers and the citizens of this province walk on, because they have created an economic climate of buoyancy that was unheard of anywhere else in this country. But what did he do? He wasted those five years by increasing the debt load of this province by \$10 billion. It went from \$30 billion to \$40 billion. I am rounding the numbers; I know it is in the range of \$39 billion to \$40 billion.

The fact of the matter is that this was a period of time when the debt should have been coming down. Now, in 1990, is there a relationship, I ask the Treasurer, in the fact that there is a very modest reduction in the debt during a year in which there may well be a discussion that will be called with the people of Ontario? How naïve does he think we are on this side of the House? Does he think this so-called balanced budget, this so-called debt reduction, this prepayment on accounts that he has rolled into this document, all of that, does not send a clear message out to the people of Ontario and particularly to those of us in political life? That is absolute nonsense.

We know exactly what he is up to. What he is up to is what I said in question period today and what I state emphatically in this budget debate this afternoon: He has put forward a political document when this province needed an economic growth document. That is what we should have had.

Let me talk to the Treasurer a little about some of the promises. People wonder why, when opinion polls and surveys are taken of what the people of Ontario think about politicians, normally we rank somewhere down there with riverboat gamblers in terms of our acceptance by the people of Canada, and this goes for politicians throughout many jurisdictions in the world. That kind of concerns me a little because I believe this to be an honest profession. I believe it to be a profession in which you can do a great deal of good for the people who elected us to serve. I believe this to be a profession where you really are in a position to make a difference. Yet we wonder why people hold politicians in low esteem all too frequently. I will tell the members why.

In 1986 the government of Ontario, just before the last provincial election, said, "We're going to invest \$850 million to construct 4,400 new hospital beds." Being someone who believes in the integrity of the process, who believes in the honesty of the statements made, even by those whom I may be struggling with in a political confrontation of some kind, I believe their statements to be rather sacrosanct in that once having been made, they should be carried out at all cost.

1600

What did we get as a result of that \$850-million promise and those 4,400 hospital beds that were specifically to be allocated in ridings, regions, towns, villages and cities right across this province? What happened? All of a sudden the 1987 election passed. The promise was made in 1986. The people of Ontario were convinced to vote a very substantial majority for the government that sits opposite. What happened to the promise? The promise has been buried in a very deep and very dark hole somewhere in this province. I have not been able to find it, but it is buried, it is done away with and I am sure that its demise is going to be deeply resented by those hospital administrators and health care workers who were promised specific beds, specific capital investment in specific communities.

This was not just \$850 million and 4,400 beds across Ontario; it was X number of millions of dollars and so many beds in Guelph. The member for Guelph, a government member, is embarrassed about what this government has done, to the extent that one of my colleagues showed me a newspaper article the other day. He says, "I do not know how I can get re-elected in this community as a result of the broken promise that was made with respect to the Guelph hospitals." He is very concerned about that.

As I look at the Pickering-Ajax hospitals and I look at the hospital up in the Midland area, in Orillia, promises were made and broken. What is the government's response to all this? They said what we have—

Mr McLean: Orangeville.

Mr Eves: North Bay, Windsor, Kitchener.

Mr Brandt: I could name many communities. They are right. London was promised a hospital. Sarnia was promised some additional money. Windsor in particular: I know my friends from Windsor have brought this up on many occasions. We could name dozens and dozens of communities, but time

will not allow us to do that this afternoon in outlining where those promises were broken.

What did the government do in order to get off the hook? What did the government do in order to say to the people of Ontario, "Well, we fooled you back in 1986. In 1986 we did not really mean it when we said \$850 million and 4,400 hospital beds. What we meant was this: We are going to scatter around a few million dollars throughout the province on some renovations and a few additional beds in some areas." In fact, when 1990 rolls around, do you know what the bottom line is, Mr Speaker? Can you believe that the bottom line is no, we did not get an increase of 4,400 hospital beds. We actually got a reduction of 2,000 hospital beds. In other words, we are now 6,400 hospital beds below the promise made by the Premier, by the Treasurer and by the Minister of Health, all of whom went to the people and said, "This is what we are going to do."

To add insult to injury, what have they done in this new, shiny, updated 1990 budget document? They have said, "We have a new plan." Well, I say, with respect, that I saw their plan in 1986. They fooled us in opposition too, because do they know what my colleagues did? They applauded the decision to build those 4,400 hospital beds. We were unanimous in this party. I do not blame the member for Brampton South for hiding. If I were the government that brought in this budget, I would hide as well. I would hide. I would go back to my riding and beg for mercy to my constituents for bringing in this kind of a nonsensical document.

What really concerns me is that not only has the government cut back on hospital beds and not followed through on its promise, but it has recycled the thing in this new budget and said: "We have a new program. It is going to be for \$1.5 billion dollars." In the way in which this Treasurer operates, he has put together a very long-term projection so that he cannot be held accountable in any single year for the spending of any money or for the accomplishments of any particular programs that he has finalized. He comes up with three-, five- and 10-year projections for a particular amount of money and it is very difficult to pin him down, because even he does not know where he is going. In particular, he does not know where he is going with this so-called \$1.3 billion over four years. I correct the record, Mr Speaker; I said \$1.5 billion. I am being a little too ambitious, but the Treasurer puts me in that kind of mood.

The fact of the matter is that I do not believe that \$1.3 billion over the next four years will see the light of day. I think we will see the Minister of Health stand up, as she has done day after day in this House, and say, "The matter is under review," or, "We have not made a decision yet."

My colleague the member for Parry Sound, the very capable member who is the Health critic, has stood up and tried to get from the Minister of Health a straight answer with respect to the question of what is going to happen with hospital construction. What is going to happen with the fact that not only are we not adding more beds to the system, but that we are cutting beds out of the system? The Minister of Health says, "That is all under review." The only thing she has not said is: "We were just teasing back in 1986,"—I could accept that as a more honest answer—"we fooled you politically. We knew there was an election coming up in 1987, so in 1986 we promised you the world and delivered you nothing. We promised you the world in hospital beds and we actually cut 2,000 of them."

How can we believe a government that now says, "There is a new day dawning." What is this, some kind of a mea culpa, some kind of a request for forgiveness on the part of the

Treasurer? He says: "The first one did not work when I promised you \$850 million, so I guess what I've got to do is up the ante. What I've got to do now is increase the stakes and make it a little richer." So he increases the stakes to \$1.3 billion and he expects 9.5 million Ontario citizens to believe him? I say no, they will not believe him, because the fact of the matter is he fooled them once and they will not be fooled a second time.

Let me talk about a couple of other things, because I do not want to go on for more than a few more hours. I think it is important—

Mr Kerrio: Could you tape this, Andy, so we can check it later?

Mr Brandt: Yes, and I will give him a copy of my speech, I say to the member for Niagara Falls. I know that when he goes back to that riding of his, especially when he gets home early enough, he likes to tuck himself into bed and lie there and read Hansard, so he can get caught up on anything he might miss during the course of a working day here at Queen's Park. I say to the member for Niagara Falls, because he is a good friend and someone whom I admire greatly, that I would be more than happy to send him an autographed copy of the Hansard of this particular speech, with which he can do what he will. I know what he will probably do with it.

Hon R. F. Nixon: Oh, he can't do that.

Mr Brandt: He might try, though. That is what I am worried about.

There are a couple of other things, Mr Speaker. Forgive me for not addressing the chair. Sometimes I get rather animated and agitated, and I turn in the wrong direction, but that is something I will catch myself on in the future. I want to look at the chair. It is something I prefer to do, as a matter of fact, because it is much more enjoyable to look at than other locations I might pick in this House.

Let me talk about a couple of other things that are of concern to me. Our party has consistently told this government about the problems related to passing on taxes and responsibilities to other levels of government. The Treasurer, in his musings about this matter during statements he has made over the course of the past few years, has even gone so far as to indicate that the municipalities of Ontario have a very substantial amount of borrowing capacity and therefore there is no real, significant problem in passing on to them these added financial responsibilities.

I say to the Treasurer that he is wrong. The municipalities have never been so angry as they are now.

1610

The current Minister of Municipal Affairs is doing his level best to try to keep them as cool and contained as possible, but I was with them at a meeting in Windsor on Friday of this past week, and the Minister of Municipal Affairs was there as well, and they are concerned about a couple of new initiatives announced in this budget that they fear ultimately are going to result in more costs being passed on to local municipalities.

The government kind of tricked them with courtroom security. The Attorney General stood up and said, "This isn't going to cost you any more money," and it did. It cost them millions of dollars right across the province.

Then the government brought in a whole bunch of new environmental initiatives and stood up and pontificated about the importance of a clean environment and said, "We're in favour of improving environmental controls and pollution abatement programs." We all said, in all parties, "We agree it

should be done." Then the government took the whole package and passed it on, through the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program and others, to the local municipalities. The government left them alone with landfill sites. The government left them alone with their sewage treatment plants and their water treatment problems and did zip all for them, nothing, and yet took all of the accolades, all of the applause, all of the positive responses that were made by the media as though the government was in fact carrying out some of these environmental improvements.

The government tricked the municipalities again when it came to that one, and it tricked them with a whole series of things, and now there are a couple of initiatives in this budget that concern them very deeply. One of them is the new sewer and water corporation.

The sewer and water corporation, as I understand it, was established for a couple of reasons, one of which is relatively sound, and that is, the way it is structured today the Ministry of the Environment is responsible for the policing and for the establishment of standards, but it is also responsible for the grant allocation, the capital works and the construction of some of these projects related to environmental controls, like sewer and water construction.

What in fact has occurred in the past is that the Ministry of the Environment has come along and said to a municipality, "You've got to improve on the treatment of your effluent and the treatment of your discharge," and the municipality has said, "We don't have any money." And they go to the Ministry of the Environment, to another door, to another officer, to another director of the ministry and they say, "Can we have some money in order to carry out a project?" like the regional sewage treatment plant in Niagara region.

The member for Niagara Falls will recall that when I was the Minister of the Environment I helped him finance that. He may recall that that was a badly needed project and we were able to put together a co-operative deal between the three levels of government. The feds came in at that time for one third; the province came in for one third; the region of Niagara came in for one third. We put together a very sensible, logical program that will benefit the people of that area. I was pleased to be of help to my colleague and good friend the member for Niagara Falls back many, many long years ago—in fact, too many for me to remember clearly now. It is all a distant, foggy past that I do not see very clearly as it relates to that particular ministry and that particular time frame.

But what has happened in connection with this new corporation is that the province is now suggesting that it will establish an arm's-length deal. That arm's-length deal is going to be one in which the construction and the grants, the approvals, the allocation process will be handled by someone other than this newly constructed entity, which will be different and completely removed from the Ministry of the Environment. They will be given approximately the same amount of money the Ministry of the Environment is getting—roughly \$250 million or \$260 million—and that money will then be used by municipalities in order to undertake their needed capital works.

I cannot take issue with what is being proposed by the government, because on the surface I see some good things in what is being proposed. What I am going to take issue with is if there is a trap in here, if in fact there is another suggestion, hidden at the moment, on the part of the Treasurer that over a period of time he is going to expect the private sector and the municipalities to pick up more and more of the funding required to undertake these needed capital works and allow the province

to back off over a period of time in quite the selfsame way it has done with education. That is exactly what they have done with education: made all kinds of promises and delivered something in the opposite direction. They said, "We're going to fund education at 60 per cent." When they took over it was 45 or 46 per cent. It is now in the range of 40 per cent and falling, and they say they are doing a good job.

I have got to tell members that the numbers simply do not support the contention the government makes that it is doing a good job with education, and I worry, as do the municipalities, I really worry that what we are going to get here is a rerun, a sense of *déjà vu*, about what is going to happen in connection with the future as we look at the track record of this government in the past.

I concern myself with this government's simply passing the buck, simply passing the responsibility, but more particularly passing on the financial demands to the local municipalities at a time when across this province the taxpayer is suffering from exhaustion. The taxpayer has had it right up to his neck with governments, for whatever reason, justifying taking more money out of his pocket, and I do not care whether it is local, provincial or federal.

That is why our party has been talking about a tax freeze and about no increases long before this Treasurer ever thought of the idea. But we are talking about it not only in 1990, when it will be politically expedient to bring in a no-increase budget; we are prepared in our party to promise that kind of performance in 1991 and 1992 at the very least as well, because we think a freeze has got to be put into place now in order to put this province back on the road to recovery where it should be.

So our concern with the sewer and watermain construction corporation, or whatever it is ultimately going to be called, is that it might become another local responsibility. We say that is wrong. We want to get it on the record because we believe there could well be a hidden plan on the part of the government to proceed in that direction.

The same thing is true of the new assessment corporation. Municipalities did assessment years ago; they were responsible for it. It was passed over to the province; the province took over the responsibility. Now, all of a sudden, the province is saying we are going to have a new, arm's-length corporation and going to fund it at the rate of \$108 million, I believe is the rate that it will be receiving. But if you are in an urban area or a high-growth area and you need an accelerated review of your assessment in that municipality, what happens? Did members read the budget carefully when it talked about that? It said you are going to have to pay for it yourself. It did not use those words, but the implication is very clear. The message is very, very open and direct. What it says is that if there is a cost over and above the \$108 million as a result of the assessment function in this province, somebody else, not this Treasurer and not this government, is going to pick up that cost. They have frozen their cost. That is what they did, and they said it is somebody else's responsibility.

I say that is wrong. If that is how they bring in a balanced budget, by simply passing on costs to someone else, by passing on programs and responsibilities to a third party, the victim of the decisions made by the Treasurer of this province, then I say that those victims have a reason to be upset, to be angry, as they are, and I say that those victims deserve a better shake from the government and a more honest relationship in a true partnership between municipal and provincial governments, which is not in place but should be.

1620

I fear that this particular document we are debating today in this House does not put forward any kind of incentives to stimulate the economy during a period of time when that is absolutely essential. I mentioned during the course of my question to the Treasurer today the need for some stimulus in the tourist industry. There is a whole host of things that could be done. I only mentioned one of them. Of course, the knee-jerk response from across the floor was: "Our accommodation tax is lower than most. We're quite competitive with our accommodation tax at the present time, so why remove it?"

Has the Treasurer of this province looked at the difference in gasoline taxes and the cost of gasoline between New York state and Ontario, between Michigan and Ontario? Has he looked at the reason why Ontario residents who do not even want to go visiting an American state go over there for a short period of time, fill up their tanks with gasoline and come home again because they can save a considerable amount of money? That is the very same reason that Americans do not want to come to Ontario, because our taxes are too high. Has he looked at the cost of the sales taxes in the province of Ontario compared to Michigan and compared to New York? Has he looked at the cost of doing business in this province, like the new employer health levy that forces prices up? The tourist industry, which is reeling under all of these costs because it is a very labour-intensive industry, is saying before it drowns completely, "Give us a little bit of help."

Who was it who asked for some relief from the five per cent accommodation tax? Was it the member for Sarnia? No. I was only the conduit, I was only the relay point for a group that knows a lot more about tourism, I say with the greatest of respect, than either the Treasurer or I. That is the tourist industry itself. What it has said is: "Give us a break, Mr Treasurer. Give us a break in this budget. All of our taxes are higher than our competitors'. We are simply not competing on a level playing field. We have problems in that we have the most dramatic downturn in tourist activity on a percentage basis in the history of this province."

Hon R. F. Nixon: Talk to Michael Wilson about the Canadian dollar.

Mr Brandt: The Canadian dollar in part is forced up in terms of the value of that dollar by the inflationary spending practices of the government of Ontario.

Interjections.

Mr Brandt: I want to say to the member for Lincoln, who has joined in this debate for the first time, that if government spending is not inflationary, if that has absolutely no impact ultimately on the rate of inflation and the value of the Canadian dollar, then he had better go back and review Economics 101 at the university of his choice, because he is wrong.

An hon member: It is the deficit on the federal government's part, not what is happening in Ontario.

Mr Brandt: I am not going to debate this in economic terms although I would be more than happy to so do with some of my colleagues, but those who would suggest that a deficit and servicing that deficit is inflationary but excessive government spending as a result of expanding programs or enlarging government services, for whatever reason, is not inflationary are whistling as they walk past the graveyard.

I want to tell my colleagues it boils down to the total amount of spending that is done by a particular government for

whatever reason. I agree that servicing the debt is in fact inflationary or part of the inflationary cycle, but so is the sum total of government spending for whatever reason. It is also inflationary. For the Treasurer to suggest anything other than that is simply not accurate, because it is the sum total of money the government is extracting from the economy. It is extracting that money from the economy whether it is extracting it for debt purposes or whether it is extracting it for program purposes. I would suggest to government members, whether you are servicing one or the other, it still adds to the inflationary pressures in a jurisdiction simply because it is the sum total of all of those dollars that are flowing in.

If, in fact, over the past four or five years—and it has slowed down a little bit in this budget, but it is not anywhere near being under control—we have had a \$10-billion increase in the debt of this government, then I guess the very argument that the members opposite would want to put forward, that servicing debt is inflationary, holds true in a very real sense in the province of Ontario. Because the only way one could carry that additional debt—namely, the increase from \$30 billion to \$40 billion, which has been the result of the actions of this Treasurer—is by taking more money out of the economy, which is exactly what he is doing. He is paying such an infinitesimal amount down on that debt—

Hon R. F. Nixon: It is \$430 million.

Mr Brandt: Come on. The only way they got \$430 million—that is one per cent of their \$45 billion budget. They cannot tell me it is some great, tremendous move towards a more fiscally balanced budget. It just is not the case. What the Treasurer has done is shadow-box his way through this budget. He brought in \$800 million in pre-paid accounts that he rolled in, he increased taxes as of the beginning of 1990 by billions of dollars and then he comes along to the taxpayer and says: “Well, there’s no increase and we’ve balanced the books. We’re going to pay off the debt.”

I have to tell him, the truth is not really an inherent part of this budget. There is some creative bookkeeping in this budget. There are some areas of fancy fiscal footwork, but the budget leaves a lot to be desired in terms of being a straightforward, accurate assessment of the current condition of this government and the future direction in which this government is going.

I want to say, Mr Speaker, in closing—that is the point at which I usually get applause—

Mr Pelissero: Is that like the preacher who says “In summing up” and then goes on for another half an hour?

Mr Brandt: I could go on longer if you would like. I have a great deal more that I wanted to share with the Treasurer, but I thought perhaps members were becoming a little weary of my sharing the truth with the Treasurer.

Mr B. Rae: No.

Mrs Marland: No, no, the public has to know.

Mr Pelissero: Are you wearing cowboy boots, Andy?

Mr Brandt: If I were wearing cowboy boots, I would tell you about it long in advance of—

Interjections.

Mr Brandt: We have in our party some very real concerns about the document tabled by the Treasurer. We feel that the document is in fact inflationary. We feel that it is excessive in terms of new taxation programs that were introduced at the beginning of 1990. We feel that there are pass-ons of respon-

sibilities and costs to local boards of education and local municipalities. We really feel that at a time when the budget of the province of Ontario should be stimulating the economy, should be finding ways to help workers who are being laid off to retrain or to find new positions, there should be assistance for our northern communities, some of which have been devastated by shutdowns and plant closings and economic problems in their areas.

There is just very little in this budget to help any of those areas. In eastern Ontario the amounts of money that have been set aside in the past and the broken promises related to what this government said it was going to do and what it actually delivered are just not acceptable. Once again, there is very little for eastern Ontario or for the citizens of that part of our province who are also experiencing very substantial shutdowns, layoffs and a general overall slowdown in the economy.

The only response, if members can believe this, I have seen on the part of the government of Ontario is to shut down some additional parks in the St Lawrence parkway system. What kind of nonsense is that? At a time when an area is in dire economic need of some kind of stimulus, what did they do? They shut down some more parks, some areas where there may have been the possibility of encouraging some more tourist traffic.

1630

So I say to the members, when you take a look across this great province of ours, when you look at southwestern Ontario, which used to be the industrial heartland of this province, and you take a look at the unemployment rates that are starting to creep up rather rapidly in places like Windsor and Chatham and Sarnia, communities that had a very strong and vibrant industrial and economic base, and you see now that the unemployment rate in Windsor is not only double-digit but is creeping about halfway up into the range of 13 or 14 per cent unemployment—my own community is in around the range of nine per cent, and some have suggested that perhaps the statistical database that is being used is inaccurate and the number is much higher than that—and you take a look at the slowdowns related particularly to the automotive industry in places like Chatham and elsewhere in southwestern Ontario, it is not only the east and the north that are in trouble, it is also southwestern Ontario. In virtually every community across this province, with perhaps the singular exception of Metropolitan Toronto, there are some very serious economic problems, problems that are, I think, very deep and problems that are very serious and that require some response on the part of government.

What can the government do? The government has to have a response other than just to prepare the groundwork for another election call, fully a year or two years before it would be necessary.

If that is the only reason for us being here, I think it is a very shallow and a very unacceptable reason indeed. I thought we were elected, all 130 of us, to attempt to make life a little easier for the people of Ontario, to attempt to raise the standard of living and the quality of life for the people we are elected to serve, not simply to work out the economic document that can best get one elected between one election and the other. There is more to it than that. There is an important responsibility, at a time when an economic document was needed in this province, to address the question of the necessary stimulus that our economy needs.

We could take industries like the tourist industry, and through some reasonable adjustments that the government could make, we could stimulate that industry in order to provide

more jobs during a period of slow economic growth, and we could do that very simply, but did we do any of those things in this budget?

No, all we did was outline a budget that I think quite inappropriately suggests there are no increases, and there are billions of dollars of increases in this budget. Second, they said that this budget was in fact a budget that would reduce the debt. I do not believe this budget reduces the debt one iota. What it has done is adjusted some numbers on a page, but it has not honestly, directly and truthfully reduced the debt. Most important, at a time when we should be stimulating the economy, this budget has simply not done anything to address the serious economic times that I see in the not-too-distant future.

For all of those reasons—and I want to say to the Treasurer that we in our party came to this place and reviewed very sensitively the budget that was put forward. We tried desperately, with an open mind and a pragmatic point of view, to find it in the goodness of our heart to support this budget in some fashion.

It is not all bad, it is just that most of it is so bad. We tried to find even those areas where we could support some of the things the Treasurer was saying. We tried to enlarge that so that we could, as a party, say, "We're in favour of what the Treasurer has proposed for the people of Ontario."

But, Mr Speaker, I have to tell you, we cannot do that. I say that to you because the members of my party have looked at this budget and they have determined that it is a bad document. It is a bad document during normal times. It is a particularly offensive and bad document during tough economic times when much more was needed than what was given to us by the Treasurer of this province.

It is for that reason, and I say this with great reluctance and almost, but not quite, an apology to the Treasurer, that we are not going to be able to support this particular budget. We will be voting against the document, simply because we believe that the document falls far short, far short indeed, of what is needed by the people of Ontario at this point in time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Cureatz): We are in the afternoon sitting of orders of the day, resuming the adjourned debate on the amendment to the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government of Ontario.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Are we not looking for an adjournment of the debate?

Some hon members: No.

The Acting Speaker: I am sorry. Is that the part where the House leader said about the rotation? Okay. The honourable member for Hamilton Mountain. I apologize.

Mr Charlton: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

It does not give me a great deal of pleasure to have to stand today to address this budget, and it does not give me a great deal of pleasure for a number of reasons that have not yet been discussed in this debate. The leader of the third party in his comments and obviously others in their comments will address what are for many individual people and groups of people in this province important questions, but most of issues that have been addressed in the budget and in the responses to date are peanuts, they are little mud puddles, compared to the issues that the government is ignoring totally.

Mr Philip: You can cover that in your 17 hours.

Mr Charlton: That is right.

This budget is a budget which becomes a perfect reflection of this government's almost total lack of understanding about what is happening here in Ontario, in the Ontario economy, to the Ontario economy, with Ontario Hydro and with this province's economic future. The very future of the economy of this province has been completely ignored in the budget that the Treasurer put before us last week.

I can recall a time when this Treasurer would have at least perked up at the thought of Ontario Hydro, for example, spending \$80 billion or \$100 billion in capital investment. As a matter of fact, I remember in the middle 1970s when Hydro was proposing to do precisely that, this Treasurer, then in opposition, stood on his feet in this House and talked about how that kind of capital investment by Ontario Hydro would bankrupt the province of Ontario.

How quickly he gets lulled to sleep in the corridors of power, or to coin a phrase from one of their former colleagues, a former Minister of Energy, how quickly it is they get mugged by Hydro in the corridors of power.

Just prior to Christmas, we had Ontario Hydro announce to this government and to the public of this province a 25-year plan, supposedly to meet the energy needs of the province of Ontario. In that plan they announced, at a very minimum, \$61 billion in capital investment over the next 25 years.

Mr Speaker, I want you to think back. Just a very short 10 years ago, there was a debate going on in Canada about a pipeline, the Mackenzie Delta pipeline debate. You will recall; they had a royal commission over it. The pipeline never went ahead, but that pipeline had a price tag of about \$20 billion, and the financial analysts in this country said, "To proceed with that pipeline in Canada at a cost of \$20 billion would bring this country, this whole nation, to the verge of bankruptcy."

Ontario Hydro has set out a 25-year plan that talks about \$61 billion in capital investment—not \$20 billion, \$61 billion.

1640

Now let's talk for a few moments about what that \$61 billion means. Mr Speaker, you know a little bit about the Darlington nuclear station because it is not too far from your home, and you will recall, for example, that when Ontario Hydro originally announced Darlington, it announced it at a cost of \$3.4 billion. That would scratch your memory a little? It was that low; \$3.4 billion was the cost of Darlington.

We do not know what the final cost is because it is still not finished yet, but the cost has gone from \$3.4 billion to \$12.7 currently and growing, because, as you know, Mr Speaker, the plant is not yet finished and there is still a good three to four years of construction left before the last reactor is finally in service. That is an increase over the original estimated cost of 3.7 times.

Let's step back to the \$61 billion for a minute.

Mr Polsinelli: Think of the jobs it created.

Mr Charlton: The member for Yorkview likes to talk about the jobs it created. I would like the member for Yorkview to tell us, just based on the Darlington performance as a reflection of Hydro's ability to estimate real costs, where we in this province are going to come up with \$225.7 billion. That is what happens to Hydro's \$61 billion proposed capital expenditure if you just multiply it by 3.7, which is exactly their record on Darlington—\$225 billion.

The government has not commented, it has hidden. The Treasurer has not commented, he has hidden. I do not wish to hand any undue applause to the former Conservative ad-

ministration in this province, but there was a time when the Treasurer of this province in the former administration had the brains and the guts to stand up to Ontario Hydro and to rein it in when its capital program got out of hand.

Interjections.

Mr Charlton: That is right. The former member for—I cannot even recall his riding now—Mr McKeough, the former Treasurer, seriously reined in Hydro when its capital expenditure programs got out of hand. This Treasurer sits by in absolute stunned silence. He has had nothing at all to say about a proposed capital expenditure program that this province will never be able to meet—never.

To be fair, perhaps it is a little too simplistic to take Hydro's \$61 billion and to multiply by the 3.7 which reflects its lack of performance in terms of predicting the real costs of Darlington. Perhaps that is a slight exaggeration into the future. The financial analysts and the energy experts out there in the province are saying that perhaps that is the case, it is a slight exaggeration to take it all the way to \$225 billion. In fact, financial analysts are predicting that the real cost of Hydro's plan will be in the neighbourhood of \$200 billion. That is just as unacceptable, that kind of a level; \$200 billion is just as unmanageable for this province as taking the straight 3.7 multiplication of Hydro's \$61 billion proposal.

The money does not exist. The borrowing power of this province does not extend to \$200 billion. Hydro's plan is a pipedream, and this government sits silent, without making a single comment, not even a cough or a hackle.

I think if you understand the impact of that kind of borrowing that Hydro has proposed, even for somebody like you, Mr Speaker, who has over the years been supportive of at least some of what Hydro has done, and certainly supportive of, as the member for Yorkview would say, the jobs that were created in the construction of Darlington, especially those jobs that directly affected your community, even you would understand the impact of that magnitude of borrowing on the rest of the economy in this province. Even the member for York Mills understands the scope and impact of borrowing of that magnitude.

We talked earlier, when the leader of the third party was speaking, about the impact of numbers like \$430 million that we are paying off the debt on and the inflationary nature of the debt at \$44 billion or \$45 billion or whatever it is and the inflationary nature of a budget—

Mr J. B. Nixon: It's the demand for new money that causes the problem.

Mr Charlton: Well, what we are talking about here is precisely that, a demand for new money, in Hydro's terms \$61 billion. Financial analysts say \$200 billion. In either case, or whether the real answer is somewhere halfway in between, they are all unacceptable because they are all unmanageable in this province without serious, significant damage to the rest of the Ontario economy. That kind of borrowing power does not exist for our whole economy, let alone just for Ontario Hydro. There would be absolutely nothing left for anybody else to borrow to invest.

But what kind of response do we get from the government to that? As I have said, none; no comment.

On the other side of the question, though, piddling around, as they do, with trying to make the people of this province believe that they have balanced a budget, members will recall that just last year in the budget they instituted a new charge

against Ontario Hydro. They called it the "debt guarantee fee charge." The Treasurer said, "Because the government of Ontario guarantees the debts of Ontario Hydro, we're going to charge it for that debt guarantee, we're going to charge it for that protection we provide to them." They brought in a bill, Bill 19, which amended the Power Corporation Act and imposed that debt guarantee fee charge.

Mr Speaker, you might recall that the fee charge was set at a very low rate initially. The Treasurer made a big point of saying that it was going to be only half of one per cent of their capital debt. In the first year, 1989, it would raise something in the neighbourhood of only \$80 million—that was only a part-year—and it would raise only \$138 million in a full year.

That is all very true. Those comments were not untrue, but, Mr Speaker, you cannot tell me that this government did not know, because Hydro had been involved in it for three years at that point. It had been involved for three years in the development of this new plan, the plan that was released just before Christmas. You cannot tell me that this government never consulted with Hydro during that development process, and you certainly cannot make me believe that it did not know, when it instituted this debt guarantee fee charge, that there were going to be major, huge capital construction proposals in that Hydro plan when it was finally released. They may not have known the precise, exact number, but there had been consultations on-going between Ontario Hydro and the member for Niagara Falls when he was the Minister of Energy, his successor, the member for Fort York, and his successor, the member for Thunder Bay, the current Minister of Energy and Minister of Natural Resources.

1650

Mr Speaker, you cannot tell me that those three ministers of energy and this government did not know there were going to be proposals for major, for significant, for monstrous capital expenditures on the part of Hydro. What does that mean? You know how the system works, Mr Speaker. All of Hydro's capital construction is done based on debt. Hydro is not a profit-making corporation, never has been and never will be. So when Hydro wants to build \$61-billion worth of facilities, it has to go out and borrow \$61 billion. It is borrowed over time perhaps, not all in one upfront consumer loan, but it all gets borrowed, every single penny. Is that not right, Mr Speaker? And they cannot even start paying off those debts until the facilities for which the money was borrowed are put into full service and are pumping out electricity into the Ontario grid. So they not only borrow, based on Hydro's proposal, \$61 billion; they start to accumulate interest all throughout the 25 years of the construction program. The debt is in fact, right off the top, much larger than \$61 billion.

Then we get into the discussion of Hydro's ability to predict accurately the real cost of that capital program. As I have said, the financial analysts are saying about \$200 billion. I do not have the expertise to know precisely what the real number is. I can tell you, though, based on Hydro's performance, that it is certainly going to be significantly more than the \$61 billion that is set out in Hydro's plan.

What does that mean in terms of this new tax which the government imposed just last year, before Hydro announced its proposed massive capital program? If Hydro leaves the fee charge at half of one per cent, as it was set out last year in the original imposition of this new tax, new fee charge, and Hydro is right that over the next 25 years the capital borrowing is only \$61 billion, then this tax that the government said would bring

in only \$138 million a year all of sudden triples and will be bringing in \$443 million a year. But we all know that is not going to happen, because we know that Hydro is not going to be able to keep the game over the next 25 years to that \$61 billion that it has set out in its plan. If the financial analysts are right, and Hydro's borrowing to implement the plan it has proposed reaches \$200 billion, then all of a sudden the Treasurer of Ontario no longer has a \$138-million-a-year tax; he has got a \$1-billion-a-year tax.

Think about this. What a beautiful kind of corner to get yourself caught in. You have got the Minister of Energy saying energy efficiency and energy conservation have to be the top priorities. They are saying that in the Ministry of Energy now. As the critic, you would understand that, Mr Speaker. We have also got the Minister of the Environment telling us we have got to dramatically reduce our consumption of fuels, of all kinds, because world scientists are telling us by the middle of the next century we will have to reduce our overall consumption of energy by 50 per cent in order to even start to address the global warming problem. We were talking about taxes earlier. When we get to talking about the global warming problem, we are talking about the very future of this planet, not just who will be adversely affected by a payroll tax, or who will be adversely affected by a fee charge to Ontario Hydro for a debt guarantee. We are talking about the very survival of the planet Earth.

So we have the Minister of Energy telling us energy efficiency has to be the top priority and the Minister of the Environment telling us we have got to deal, and deal very severely, with the consumption of energy in this country in order to meet the kind of targets that international scientists are setting for us, at the same time as we have the Treasurer imposing a debt guarantee fee charge that gives exactly the opposite incentive.

When the Treasurer looks at capital investment by Hydro versus energy efficiency, which looks better to the Treasurer? Remember what I just said a few minutes ago. If Hydro invests the \$61 billion it has predicted, his tax triples just like that. If Hydro is wrong though and the financial analysts are right, and the investment required to implement the Hydro plan is not \$61 billion, it is really \$200 billion, all of a sudden the Treasurer's tax has gone up almost 10-fold. So he says, "That could be a \$1-billion tax for me down the road, \$1 billion I could use for some of these environmental things and some of these energy things everybody is talking about that I do not understand, but I could use some of those dollars, couldn't I?" That is what he is saying to himself.

Think about it. He has created himself a tax that creates an incentive for this Treasurer and this government to see Ontario Hydro spend dollars on capital investment, and the more dollars it spends, the more taxes the Treasurer takes in. So the Treasurer sits back and applauds when Hydro says, it is \$61 billion in capital investment. The Treasurer says, "Wow, that will pay off a little more than the provincial debt," without even thinking about the consequences for the overall Ontario economy of that kind of heavy borrowing on the part of Ontario Hydro.

I remember when the member for Niagara Falls was the Energy critic for the opposition party. He used to stand up in this House and criticize the huge capital borrowing of Ontario Hydro and the impact that capital borrowing was having. I also remember when he and the member for Grey-Bruce stood in this House and criticized the kind of irresponsible things that were done around uranium contracts and the \$600-million interest-free loan that was given to those companies. This is the

same kind of thing that is happening right now. The Liberals are all sitting there with their fingers in their ears because they do not want to hear what is going on.

Mr Pollock: That is shameful.

Mr Charlton: Just totally shameful. We have a problem because we have a contradiction in terms of incentives and best interests here.

To make the situation even worse, you will recall, Mr Speaker, that when the Treasurer implemented that debt guarantee fee charge last year, he made sure it was a tax that he would never have to come back to this Legislature to get increases on, because it is a tax that can increase two ways. You will recall again that a few moments ago I said that the debt guarantee fee charge in the initial round was set at one half of one per cent. Unfortunately, it was not set by the amendments to the Power Corporation Act; it was set by order in council. Any increases in that fee charge in the future will not be debatable here in this Legislature. They will not ever come before this House. So if the Treasurer decides that his potential \$1-billion tax really should be a \$2-billion tax, he just says to the Premier: "We've got to pass an order in council. I need some bucks in a hurry. Let's up the debt guarantee fee from half of one per cent to one per cent." All of a sudden, that tax that is going to bring him in \$138 million this year would bring him in \$276 million this year, next year, the year after or whenever they decide.

1700

So we have a tax that goes up two ways. Every time Ontario Hydro borrows to build a dam, or borrows to upgrade the hydraulic system we have down on the Niagara River, or borrows to put in a new hydraulic site in northern Ontario, or borrows to retrofit one of our coal-fired plants with scrubbers to clean up the emissions that are coming out of the stack, or borrows to build a new plant of any kind—whether it is coal, gas, oil or perhaps gas turbines, which are some of the new, smaller-sized technology we are seeing put in more localized areas rather than the big kinds of plants we have seen in the past—any kind of borrowing that Hydro does increases the Treasurer's tax because the tax is based on the total capital debt of Ontario Hydro, a capital debt which last year, when he set the tax in place, was \$27.6 billion. That debt has increased somewhat since then and, if Hydro has its way, through its new 25-year proposed plan, will increase dramatically and rapidly over the next 15 years, up to and including the end of the 25-year plan.

We have the government ignoring what is probably the major economic consideration this government should be involved in, and that is understanding what it is that Hydro has proposed and what the resulting impact will be if Hydro's plan is approved, either at \$61 billion or \$200 billion or somewhere in between. This province cannot afford that kind of capital borrowing, that kind of capital expenditure.

Have we seen anything in this budget that even begins to address those questions? Was there a single new energy efficiency initiative in the budget? Was there a single new dollar of government funding assigned to energy efficiency programs? No. Two weeks ago, Mr Speaker, when I got up in the House, the Minister of Energy unfortunately was absent that day, so I asked my question of the Premier. You will recall, because I think you were here that day—as a matter of fact, I know you were here that day; you asked the question right after me, because here you are in Hansard.

But the basic question I asked the Premier was why it was that he and Ontario Hydro were bragging about the fact that Ontario Hydro's energy efficiency initiatives were the most aggressive of any utility in North America when in fact that was not the case? The Premier responded to me, in his second answer to my second question: "My honourable friend equates results to spending. That is one of the structural problems of the New Democratic Party."

This member does not equate spending with results in the way that the Premier does. As a matter of fact, his answer to my question was a reflection of his attitude and his problem with the energy efficiency issue. My question related to the fact that Ontario Hydro did not in fact have the most aggressive energy efficiency program on the continent.

The reason the Premier was tricked into believing that it had the most aggressive energy efficiency program on the continent was because it had the biggest dollar numbers. It was he who was equating results with spending, not me. In reality, Ontario Hydro, because it happens to be one of the biggest utilities on the continent, had an energy efficiency program whose total dollars were bigger than many others.

The question I had raised with the Premier was about a utility, Central Maine Power in the state of Maine in the United States. It is a privately owned utility, not a public utility, I should add. Central Maine Power is only 10 per cent as large as Ontario Hydro, one tenth the size of Ontario Hydro, yet it is spending twice as much money this year as Ontario Hydro is spending on energy efficiency. Why is that important? Is it important just because it is spending twice as much money? Of course not.

It is the program and the results of the program, it is the energy efficiency gains per dollar of expenditure that are important, especially if they are all cost-effective; in other words, none of those energy efficiency gains have any net cost in the long run because they pay for themselves.

What we have is a small utility in the state of Maine, one tenth the size of Ontario Hydro, that in the last six years has eliminated 300 million kilowatt-hours from its system. It has saved 300 million kilowatt-hours. That works out to pretty close to 15 per cent of its overall system.

What have we done in the same six years in the province of Ontario, where we are supposed to have the most aggressive energy efficiency program on the continent? That is what the Premier said. That is what Hydro says. What have we done in that same six years? We have allowed our system to grow for four of those six years at five per cent a year and for two of those six years at better than two and a half per cent.

That is something around 2.6 or 2.7 for the first two of the six and five per cent a year since then at the same time as a little utility, without any of the brain power or clout that Ontario Hydro supposedly has, cuts its overall demand by 15 per cent and saves 300 million kilowatt-hours. It is all done cost effectively, therefore, at no cost to the electrical energy consumers in the state of Maine. Why no cost? Because they are cost-effective; they pay for themselves.

But Ontario Hydro says that it cannot do that here in the province of Ontario, that it is beyond its mandate under the Power Corporation Act. The president of Ontario Hydro writes to the current minister and tells her that when I make a proposal. But does the Minister of Energy do anything to change the act, to allow this same kind of sane, useful economic initiative to go on? No. "No comment; we are studying it."

Like everything else that this Liberal government is doing, it is studying that. They will study it for the next 25 years until

we have built four new Darlington-size nuclear plants in this province and we have spent the \$200 billion that we could not afford to spend and we have totally decimated the Ontario economy in the process. That is the kind of understanding that this government has of what is happening in the Ontario economy, what is happening with the kind of proposals that Ontario Hydro is making and where this government is leading us in terms of our economic future.

It is just like last week when my colleagues from Hamilton and I got up—I guess it was on the day the budget was delivered because our leader was in the lockup along with our Treasury critic. My colleagues the member for Hamilton East and the member for Hamilton West and I got up on the leader's question, so we had a question and two supplementaries.

1710

Our question related to the announcement by Stelco that it would be laying off 800 people and essentially—because the 800 people was just the nub of the announcement—its announcement got into serious discussion of the economic hard times that lay ahead of us. As a matter of fact, the spokesman for Stelco was the first major industrial spokesman in Canada to seriously set out in real terms just how hard the times around the corner are going to be.

Up until now everybody has been saying: "Yes, there's going to be a recession. There will be a slight slowing down. It'll be like a little bump in the road. Nobody'll hardly feel it, but it won't be anything to worry about." For the first time we had a spokesman for a major industry in this country saying, "Our best indications are that this one is going to be really nasty." As a matter of fact, the Stelco spokesman used terms like "the unbelievable bungling of Detroit last year."

We are going to see some major, major economic downturn resulting from downturn in the auto industry, with its impact on steel, and spinning from there out right through the parts industry. This Treasurer is saying, "Hey, we're going to create jobs in the next year." He is wearing a blindfold and he is going to shoot himself in the foot. This government does nothing in its budget but attempt to tell the people of this province, "We balanced the budget and for the first time in 43 years we paid a little, wee, piddly piece off the provincial debt."

Mr D. R. Cooke: Four hundred and thirty million dollars is piddly? What's \$430 million?

Mr Charlton: Half a billion dollars is big? Then why are you guys so quiet when it comes to talking about \$61 billion?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Charlton: If half a billion dollars is big, \$61 billion has to be enormous and you say nothing.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member for Hamilton Mountain will address the Speaker, please.

Mr Charlton: You do not even understand what it is you are saying when you make those comments.

The Deputy Speaker: As I am trying to request, the member for Hamilton Mountain will address only the Speaker as per the standing orders, and other members will recognize that only one member has the floor.

Mr Charlton: You are so right, Mr Speaker. It just upsets me so much when I hear members say things that so clearly indicate their lack of understanding about what is happening here in the province of Ontario, where on the one hand they

equate half a billion dollars as something significant at the same time as they sit around and ignore \$61 billion.

That is exactly the problem I find with this budget. The comments that are coming from over there are a precise reflection of what is in the budget. There is no understanding of what is happening to the economy in this province; instead, a budget that attempts to brag about a piddly little thing like half a billion dollars when the real consequences are sitting out there unaddressed and unattended by this government.

The government has chosen not even to be involved directly in the hearings that are reviewing Hydro's plan. There are a lot of good advocates from across the province who will be involved. I will be there and even the critic for the third party will be there, but this government will not be there.

Mr Philip: Where will this government be, do you think?

Mr Charlton: They will probably be out trying to storm up an election campaign to get one over as quickly as they can before the people of Ontario figure out what \$61 billion means.

At any rate, let me just wrap up my comments by saying that the greatest failing I find with this budget is the silence, the absolute and total silence, around what are the most important economic issues confronting the future of this province's economy.

We have not even seen minimal recognition of, not a single new initiative on energy efficiency, not a single new comment on a new direction, no mention of how this government is going to respond to Hydro's proposal to spend at a minimum—and I say "a minimum" because they are Hydro's figures and its record in terms of predicting accurately is not the best—at a very minimum \$61 billion in capital investment that this province and the economy of this province cannot afford.

We have seen absolutely no understanding of the fact that the \$61 billion is likely far closer to \$200 billion and that that kind of capital borrowing taken out of the ability of this province and of all of the industrial and commercial enterprise in this province to expand will devastate the economy of Ontario. But this government makes no comment.

That is the biggest single failing of this budget. It is the lack of recognition of the very serious consequences that are evolving for our economic future and the inability of this government to recognize them or to address them any way, shape or form.

Mr Ballinger: I am very pleased to rise this afternoon in support of the Treasurer's budget. In the three years that I have been in the House, this of course being the third budget, I always find it uniquely interesting to be on this side of the House. I liken what transpires in here to a hockey game. We all cheer for our team regardless of whether we are the best team or not.

But I am amazed, this year especially, when we really do have a balanced budget and we have paid down for the first time in 43 years almost \$500 million in capital debt, to listen to a member on the other side say it is a piddly little amount and means absolutely nothing. Three years ago when I came in, there was a \$3 billion shortfall in balancing the day-to-day operations of the province of Ontario.

The leader of the third party spoke a little earlier and said that he was disappointed the Treasurer has not been tough enough. Quite frankly, I just do not know how anybody can make that statement. The Treasurer has been extremely tough in the last three budgets he has brought forth. He has balanced the budget.

If any one of us sitting in the Legislature here today thinks that Ontario is not better served in 1990 than it was in 1985

when the NDP and the Liberal Party formed a very good coalition to change 42 years of history in this province to get rid of the Tories, I am absolutely amazed to listen to some of the members of the official opposition argue that there are so many shortfalls in this budget in the ways the government has not addressed the real issues. I find it—

Mr Laughren: I couldn't have said it better.

Mr Ballinger: Quite frankly, the member for Nickel Belt is always right in there from an economic point of view, duking it up with the Treasurer, and I enjoy his comments. I do not always agree with them.

I guess the interesting part from my perspective is, after spending 10 years in municipal government, the last five as mayor of my own community in Uxbridge, a growing community, I can remember back in the early 1980s when our community could not give a building permit away. Last year our community issued about 1,500 new building permits for new home construction. My riding, Durham-York, in the greater Toronto area, is just one of the many communities that have been put under tremendous growth.

1720

We, as the government of Ontario, have tried to meet the needs of those growing communities. There is no question that we have raised taxes, but let me give members just one small example—education. Before 1985, the capital money being transferred down from the provincial government to the school boards was around \$68 million. In the last five years, we have transferred down to the school boards, annualized, \$300 million each year. I was really happy to see in the budget this year that the Treasurer included an additional \$300 million, which brings that total to \$1.5 billion for new school construction.

Mr Laughren: It is flat-lining.

Mr Ballinger: The member for Nickel Belt sits over there and yells and screams about flat-lining. That is not flat-lining, to go from \$65 million to \$300 million each and every year five years in a row. He calls that flat-lining. That is the trouble with NDP mathematics. They just simply cannot count. I mean, it is so fundamental when you look at that. As the member for the riding of Durham-York, I am proud of what the Treasurer has been doing for new school construction, and I am more than happy this year because that additional \$300 million will take some of our students out of portables and put them into the classrooms.

The leader of the third party was jamming away here about the Treasurer's magic with balancing the budget, and he was blaming us for everything. Interestingly enough, we do not set the interest rates in this country. That is a federal monetary policy. He was arguing about the increase in the Canadian dollar pegged to the United States dollar. That is not our policy. That is a federal Tory policy.

He says that our budgets have increased and will fuel inflation. If anything will fuel inflation in this country, it certainly is the high interest rates. He wants to go out into the ridings and speak to the home builders. They will tell him what is causing the inflation in this country, and it is not the provincial budget. It certainly is not the provincial budget.

Mr Laughren: You leave Marco out of this. You leave Marco out of this debate. Don't always talk about Marco. Get on to somebody else.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Ballinger: I do not mind being heckled by the member for Nickel Belt. I quite enjoy participating in that myself once in a while. Since he is not any taller than I am, it is quite easy for me to meet him at eye level and I do not have to stand on the pedestal to argue with him.

I guess all of us, most of us, spend Fridays in our constituency offices. Some days are good days and some days are very frustrating days, and only from the point of view that most of us deal with a whole host of constituency problems. I find that when I am dealing with constituents in my office and I look at where we have come in the last five years in social policy, as an example, and our commitment to the various social programs—

Mr Laughren: Health care?

Mr Ballinger: Yes, and even in health care. I am proud of our health care system, proud of the commitment of our minister. It is not easy, in health care especially, to operate with a balanced budget.

Mr Speaker, if I could get my members on my own side here to be quiet, maybe I could finish my comments. I thank the member.

I want to get back to this point about the constituency office. As the mayor of a community, I used to deal with all kinds of issues, but never did I realize, coming to the provincial level, the agony and the tough situations in which some of our people out there in Ontario find themselves. A lot of times they fall through the cracks where there is not a provincial program.

In the last five years, and I am a firm believer of this, as we have addressed those issues collectively, brought to the attention of the government either by us or by the other two parties, we have reached out to meet those needs and you cannot do that for nothing. There will be lots of people who say we are not doing enough and that is fair, but we are doing a heck of a lot more in Ontario, this Liberal government, than the previous Tory government ever dreamed about when it comes to social policy.

For me it is very simple. In our family, we have dealt with that on a very personal level. I know that five years ago, in our own family, the government's addressing of an issue was not there; it was non-existent. It has been addressed in the past five years and it was done under the member for Kitchener-Wilmot, one of the best ministers of Community and Social Services this province has ever seen, very aptly followed by the member for York North, who is a similar type of personality, who is a humanist and has a social conscience, who believes that what we are doing as a government in spending on those programs is really important.

The frustrating part, I find, is when the opposition members get up and say we are not doing enough in social policy. Then on the other hand they get up and they say, "Well, you know, you are raising taxes." Now, if there was ever a conflict—

An hon member: Sucking and blowing at the same time.

Mr Ballinger: That is right. There is a term for that and I certainly do not want to use that term in the Legislature, but we all know it off by heart. We have all yelled it under our breath.

That happens time and time again in here. I view my role as a Liberal government member to stand up and defend what I believe is one heck of a good budget, one I am proud of and one with which I am more than happy to go back to the constituents in my riding of Durham York, made up of five communities—Uxbridge, Brock, East Gwillimbury, Georgina and Whitchurch-Stouffville—and say to the people who elected me that I have

no difficulty in defending a budget like this, and I can break it down in many ways.

Last Thursday morning, in the little hamlet of Sunderland, we had 80 farmers from across the riding show up to a little country breakfast with the member for Timiskaming, the Minister of Agriculture and Food. We had a very fruitful discussion, whether the people on the opposite side care to know about this, and the feedback I got is that Ontario has not abandoned the farmers at all. We have not abandoned the farmers.

In fact, we started out discussing the budget, the \$48 million in the interest reduction, the \$48 million for the land stewardship program, and the farmers spent most of their time discussing federal issues. It is not the Ontario government that has abandoned the farmers. It is the federal government that has abandoned the farmers.

Mr Pelissero: Free trade and GATT.

Mr Ballinger: Free trade—absolutely right—was the number one issue. Supply management? The farmers are concerned. The latest issue is the feds allowing the soya bean import into Ontario, where the Ontario farmer now cannot compete because of the subsidized soya beans that are coming into our province, all done by the feds, not by the province of Ontario.

I sit in here and I listen to all the opposition members beat all of our ministers up on a daily basis. I appreciate that is their job, but I also know my job is—

Mr Laughren: To defend everything.

Mr Ballinger: No, to defend what I believe we should be defending and I am up here today because this is a good budget, an awfully good budget. I have not heard, Mr Speaker, with the greatest respect, one member on the opposition side say anything constructive about this budget, not one. Even the point the previous speaker mentioned, the piddly little amount of reducing the capital debt of \$500 million—the first time in 43 years that debt has been reduced by anyone and it was reduced by this Treasurer, and what do those guys say? "Oh, a piddly little amount. It does not mean a hill of beans. It does not even contribute to anything." But the point is that he has done it, and if there has been any fiscal responsibility done in this province, it has been done by the Treasurer of Ontario, on whose back—

Mr Philip: On whose backs?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Ballinger: Sure, he has raised—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

1730

Mr Ballinger: I do not mind the interference from the opposite side. I participate in that on a regular basis myself.

I want to pick up where I left off before I was so rudely interrupted. Coming from a riding like mine that is in the greater Toronto area, we feel those economic pressures, transportation pressures, education pressures, health care pressures, social service pressures. They are all there. The riding I represent is about 90,000 people, an increase of about 10,000 or 12,000 since the election in 1987. I am sure that before too long my riding will be made up of about 100,000, mostly commuters, mostly working in the greater Toronto area—the Markham area, the Richmond Hill area, Toronto.

Our recent \$5-billion transportation announcement for the GTA will certainly—

Mr Pelissero: How much was that?

Mr Ballinger: It is \$5 billion.

Mr Pelissero: A piddly amount.

Mr Ballinger: Not a piddly amount.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Ballinger: I sat in the House that day—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Will members please respect the standing orders. The only member who has the floor is the member for Durham-York, who may proceed.

Mr Ballinger: I sat in the House that day. I was somewhat perplexed, to put it quite mildly, that the opposition members' response to an announcement like that was: "Well, it's so-so. Yes, there were some good initiatives but it was not good enough." Then the problem you get into, and I understand it, is you get the regional arguments. You get members getting up from other parts of Ontario saying, "That is okay for the GTA, but what are you doing for my part?" Then you get somebody holding a map up in here and saying: "What, did you forget about us?"

I guess my role is to represent the riding in the Legislature—

Mr Laughren: Ask Sterling Campbell. He'll tell you.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Nickel Belt, please.

Mr Ballinger: It is to represent the constituents of my riding and to ensure that in all of those areas of education, transportation, health care, social services, we get our share. That is fair. Every member in here has a similar problem.

I do not think some of the other areas of Ontario that have not seen or felt the tremendous growth have any idea about the pressures that the municipalities, school boards, hospitals and the transportation authorities are undergoing right now. For people who commute, I know when we raised the licence fee in last year's budget from \$60 to \$90 in the GTA, I received a fair number of letters and phone calls from constituents who were not very pleased about that. I do not blame taxpayers for being upset about paying a tax if they cannot see the results of the revenue.

But that \$5-billion announcement in the greater Toronto area has a substantive impact on my riding. In the short run, in the immediate run, it is going to take some while to get up and running, but in the long run it is going to be very helpful to my riding. Increasing the number of trains in Whitchurch-Stouffville, as an example: If you come from the north end of my riding in either Brock or Uxbridge township, prior to putting the Stouffville train on the line, you would have had to drive to Pickering. Pickering was the only stop where you could get on the GO train. We have now extended that out to Ajax and Whitby, with a commitment to Oshawa and as far away as Bowmanville. That will make a substantive difference to my commuters. It means they do not have to go to Pickering. They can go to any one of those stations or else they can go to Stouffville.

Just the other day, I was going through Whitchurch-Stouffville and I noticed GO Transit now has doubledecker trains on the track in Whitchurch-Stouffville that are new, which means

that the taxpayers, the commuters, are responding to the initiatives. If they were not responding to the initiatives, there would be no need for doubledecker trains and no need for additional hours, varying the hours so that there would be more flexible schedules for the commuters. We are doing that now, which means the commuters are responding, which means that initiative has been well received. Consequently, as to the increased taxes that went with that, the people can physically see, and they can taste and they can smell where their taxes are going.

I have had good response from my taxpayers, saying: "It is about time. Finally, we have a government that realizes the needs of the communities in the greater Toronto area." Until we took office here, there was no such thing as a GTA. There was no co-ordination. The previous Tory government had no idea what it was doing. It was like sitting on a big stewpot that kept bubbling over and bubbling over. They did not even know how to respond to that. We have responded to that. We have raised taxes to do that, but when you raise taxes, people say "Where does the money go?" It does not go into thin air. It goes to improve our communities across this province. Since I represent one close to Toronto, I can only speak on behalf of my riding, the five communities I represent and the 90,000 people who live there.

Nobody likes to pay more taxes, but the federal Tories are classic guys who have raised taxes and raised the debt. They blamed the Trudeau era when they took over in 1985 or 1984, but they have doubled the debt in the five and a half years they have been there. They have not reduced that debt one cent. What have we got here in Ontario? We have a provincial Treasurer who reduced the current debt almost \$3 billion and is now starting to work on the capital debt this year of an additional \$500 million.

How can the opposition sit over there with a straight face and say, "The Treasurer's financial policies are out to lunch"? I will tell you, Mr Speaker, who is out to lunch in this Legislature, and it is not the Treasurer—far from it. He is the first Treasurer in this province to even have a vision of what his responsibility is, in balancing budgets, providing necessary programs for the people in need in this province and meeting the needs of the future citizens of Ontario. He has done that extremely well.

I have not heard one group over there say, "Treasurer, you've done a good job." In fact, the leader of the third party was saying today that the Treasurer has missed the mark. If anybody missed the mark, it was the Tory government when it was in power. I lived through 10 years of that as a municipal politician, and if you did not play their game 10 years ago, you did not play in the game. We do not play that way; we do not play that way at all.

An hon member: We work for everybody.

Mr Ballinger: That is right. It does not matter whether you are a Tory or a Liberal in a riding, the government serves you. That is their job and their responsibility. That is what we are attempting to do.

The leader of the third party also made a statement that really intrigued me. His point was that anybody can govern when times are good. I say to the members, then, what happened to Brian Mulroney? Do members want to talk about a 15 percent? There is a 15 percent. He was elected when times were good and he has botched up everything he has ever put his hand on. So for the Tories to come into the House and say that the Treasurer does not know what he is doing is a joke; absolutely a joke.

I want to get back to this farmer's breakfast I had in my community—

Interjections.

Mr Ballinger: Oh, the members on the other side can laugh all they want.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Ballinger: I do not mind them laughing. That is all right.

Mr Philip: You are going to get a free fridge, Bill.

Mr Ballinger: I would believe the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale would make a dumb comment like that to me.

Mr Philip: Well, repeat the comment.

Mr Ballinger: I am not going to repeat the comment. You said it. It is too dumb to repeat.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Ballinger: My riding does not have a strong agricultural community any longer. It used to be all agricultural, but as Metropolitan Toronto and the other communities have grown—

Mr Laughren: There goes the farm land.

Mr Ballinger: No, there is a lot of farm land still there, but not a lot of good farmers. It is tough to farm anywhere across Canada today. It takes more than just one level of government to respond to the needs of the farmer.

1740

I guess there is a disappointing part, as I view it anyway. I went there with my provincial agriculture minister with a real good provincial agricultural budget to discuss agricultural issues. Lo and behold, almost every issue that came out that day was another level of government's issue. People get confused.

Mr Pollock: I bet you steered it that way too.

Mr Ballinger: It is okay for the member for Hastings-Peterborough. He has been there, and he was on the government side.

Mr Pelissero: What was the level of funding at that time?

Mr Ballinger: I know what those fellows were spending on agriculture before we came here. I know what we are spending now, and we are responding.

Mr Pollock: There are more bankruptcies now than there ever were.

Mr Ballinger: Well, then, talk to your federal counterparts.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member for Durham-York will address strictly the Speaker and the other members will adhere to the standing orders that allow for only one member at a time.

Mr Ballinger: I apologize, Mr Speaker. I find it somewhat frustrating to stand here giving my speech on the budget and being heckled by a Tory member of the Legislature who is saying there are more bankruptcies now than there ever were. Well, do not look to us. We say, talk to your federal Tories in Ottawa. They are the ones who do not care about the family farm. It sure is not the province of Ontario. The Treasurer's commitment to the family farm is unprecedented in Ontario. We spend more on agriculture in Ontario than another province in

Canada. What are your buddies up in Ottawa doing? Sitting on their fannies.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I will repeat my invitation to the member for Durham-York to address only the Speaker.

Mr Ballinger: Sorry, Mr Speaker, but as the member for Nickel Belt often says, I have been provoked.

I have a businessman in one of my communities who owns four car dealerships. Whenever there is a downturn in the economy, and we could tell today in question period, when we get questions about automobile afterparts, factories and slow-down in sales, obviously the first industry, when it starts to slow down it has the biggest effect on our economy, is the auto industry. This gentleman has four car dealerships, has been 40 years in business, knows the cycles well, knows when to hold them and when to fold them, as they say in a poker game.

I find somewhat interesting all the doom and gloom we have been reading in the papers lately. Newspapers sell advertising. They encourage you to buy ads in the paper and they encourage you to spend money to advertise your product. Then on the front page they tell you nobody is buying anything. The economy has gone for a you-know-what. So what you have to do to really get the check and balance in there, the benchmark, is to go and speak to the people who are in the business.

This gentleman told me the other day that there is no question there is a tailing off right now in the economy. Certainly, it is not as bad as what some of the opposition members would like us to believe in here today. It is there; there is no question it is there. The businessman today who watches that and monitors it and governs himself accordingly is the one who will survive.

The last recession, as we know, was in the early 1980s. This gentleman told me that it took 18 months in Ontario to come out of that recession in the automobile business. In the United States it took four years to come out of the same recession. He has been around in this business for 40 years. He says it is a trend, it is always a cycle, and all you have to do is watch for it and prepare yourself for it. It is coming, but it certainly is not as bad as what everyone in here would like us to believe.

I think the budget did respond to that. I think the Treasurer monitored very closely through all his economic advice what we should be doing as a province. There is no tax increase, as we know, except for the one cent on cigarettes. Of course then, as we all know over on this side of the House, we are being accused of it being an election budget. Last year we were being accused of the highest increase in spending in the history of the province of Ontario. This year there is no increase, and what do they tell us guys over here? It is an election budget. "You guys must have a secret plan because you did not raise taxes, so we can't nail you on the increase in taxes, we'll have to get at you another way." So they are going to get at us by telling us, "Yes, precisely what you folks are doing is putting forth an election budget."

I think the role of a government is to have a feel for the people out there whom it represents. There is no question people feel they are paying enough taxes. Our responsibility here as a government is to provide the services for those communities across Ontario with the money we have raised, and what the Treasurer is saying this year, quite simply, is, "I'm going to raise \$44 billion and I'm going to spend \$44 billion and I'm going to leave a little surplus." He has been working on that, in the three years that I have been here and the two years before that, to balance the budget—the first Treasurer to do that in Ontario for some time. Prior to 1985, when the Tories were in

power, they said they were in a recession. Well, the recession was in 1980-81, the recession was not in 1984, when they were in power, and yet they had a \$2.6-billion deficit.

You cannot sort of sit on the fence and not raise taxes because it is politically unpopular but still spend the money you do not have. That is something the Treasurer has gotten away from, and that is good fiscal management. It is the way most of us would like to run our own homes. We earn the money and then we spend the money, and if we have got a little in the bank at the end of the year, that is great. The average citizen would like to manage his own household budget in the same fashion. But the criticism is just unbelievable from the opposition.

I know, I said before that I view our role as to propose, our role is to govern, and their role is to oppose regardless. It does not necessarily only happen in finance; it happens every day here. I sat through question period today. I did not hear anything but negative comments from the opposition. That is their role, and I understand that, but all of us collectively on this side and this year have a responsibility out there in Ontario to say to the people of Ontario: "This is what we've done. This is what we've done in the last five years, the last four years, the last three years, the last two years and the last one year."

I am quite happy to do that, as a member of the Liberal government, and if there is an election this fall, I will be more than happy to hit the bricks like everybody else in here. I can assure you, Mr Speaker, there will be a lot of blood on the highway before I give up the riding of Durham-York. I am very proud to represent that riding and I am very proud to be a part of this government. I have no difficulty whatsoever in defending those issues that I believe are important steps that we have made as a government, not only in fiscal responsibility but in areas of health care, in areas of transportation, in areas of agriculture, in areas of social services, in areas of education, all very important, again, to my riding because of the growth pressures that we are constantly under in Durham-York.

One of the other members talked about the down zone here, the downloading on municipalities of provincial policies and provincial programs. I always find that analogy very unique.

Mr Philip: It's wrong for the Tories to do it to the province, but it's right for you to do it to the municipalities.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Ballinger: I do not mind the nattering over there from the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale, because he has never been a municipal politician so he does not know what he is talking about, but quite frankly, as a municipal politician of 10 years—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Ballinger: There is a game going on.

Interjection.

Mr Ballinger: That is right, but I want to tell the member, I am speaking, he is not.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind the members of standing orders also.

1750

Mr Ballinger: As a municipal taxpayer, I have always viewed my role as being an equity partner in a corporation. Let me just give members an example of how those areas within the

greater Toronto area have benefited from some of the government initiatives over the last few years.

The expansion of GO Transit has been tremendously important and very fruitful in terms of how people have gained in my riding.

I have lived in the same house on the same street for 20 years. The value of my property, as Toronto and the GTA has grown, which has created a whole market out there for people to be able to move out to Uxbridge and commute into Toronto, has increased about 12 or 13 times from my original purchase price in 1970, but my realty taxes have only gone up about five times, and we are on market value assessment, and if you really believe in a market value assessment as I do, you pay according to what the value of your land is. There will be a substantial difference if the municipality, in its wisdom, invokes another section 63 so that in fact it could update the market value of the property, but in the interim, anyone who has owned a house in the GTA in the last five years has seen tremendous increase in equity, not only because of provincial initiatives, but a lot of it has to do with provincial initiatives.

When people move into a community like mine, the first thing they want to look at is the school. We have a lot of young families moving in; they want to look at the school. They want to know, if the school is not there, when it is going to be built, where the commitment is. I have had some good success in my riding, and some not so good, because the communities have grown far faster than either the province or the school board can fiscally respond to in terms of—one community not very far from me put 800 homes up and they sold almost over night. Then we start worrying about the school, and the province has been trying to respond to those particular needs, but it is not only in education.

In transportation, as I said earlier, the expansion of GO Transit has just made a tremendous difference. It means now that some people only have to have one car instead of two, because, as we all know, in most families today it takes two people to work. Consequently, the government has a responsibility to provide day care so that both members of the family can go out and work. If we are providing the day care it allows them to do that, to have that additional income which certainly allows them to live in communities outside of that Metropolitan Toronto area but within commuting distance.

I want to get back to the municipal comment that I was going to make earlier before I was interrupted. That is, I have five mayors and five councils. We work very closely together, as I did when I was a mayor. I worked very closely with my provincial member and I worked very closely with my federal member, for that matter, even though I do not see them as often as I see—

Mr Laughren: Here it comes.

Mr Ballinger: Fooled him, did I not?

—my municipal politicians.

There is no question that we have been involved with some programs that municipalities disagree with, and I think that is fair, just as the feds are involved with programs that we disagree with. The important thing is, we all represent the same taxpayer and the bottom line is, collectively, between all three levels of government, are we providing the necessary service to the taxpayers? If we are, then we can all fight about whose responsibility it is or whose money we should be spending, but it all comes out of the same pocket.

In my area, because of the diversification of the communities—I have some farm areas I spoke about earlier, I have

got growth areas right next door to Markham, and the Whitchurch-Stouffville area, which are feeling those pressures from Markham, which has been one of the fastest-growing municipalities in Ontario. In areas of public transportation, we are feeling those pressures that, if GO Transit were there—but there is not any municipal public transportation, for which there is very quickly becoming a need.

We are seeing pressure for health care. I am really lucky in my riding. We just opened a new hospital. The Markham Stouffville Hospital was opened officially by the minister a month ago now, I guess. I made a statement in the House of how proud I was as the member, of the first hospital to be opened in Ontario in about the last five or six years. The commitment from our government was over \$30 million and it was a joint partnership between the province, the region and the local municipality as well as a fundraising group. So those needs of that community have been met, and met very greatly.

When people move into a community they look at that, the health care facilities. If I were going to move into this community, I would ask, "Has the government provided the necessary service for me." In Whitchurch-Stouffville it certainly has. I know that the people in Whitchurch-Stouffville now are about a 10-minute drive away from the hospital where before they had to go either to Scarborough or over into Richmond Hill, to York Centre. So now that is a real asset.

That money did not come out of the air. That money came from a commitment from the Ministry of Health, and we did

that from taxpayers. If you are raising taxes and you are not showing the taxpayers what we are doing with the money, then they absolutely have the right to take issue with the government. But when you raise taxes, you balance the budget and you provide those necessary services for the community, then you are doing your job. In this particular case, we have done that.

I thank the member for that little note.

Mr Laughren: What did it say?

Mr Ballinger: I just got the hook.

I just want to thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity to bring forth my ideas. Since the House leader wants to make a comment, I just want to say how happy I am to represent Durham-York, how pleased I am with the Treasurer and how we will have absolutely no difficulty in supporting this budget if we are on the hustings this fall.

On motion by Mr Ballinger, the debate was adjourned.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Mr Elston: Mr Speaker, I am advised by the House leader that notwithstanding any previously announced business, the first order called for Tuesday 1 May will be the 51st order.

The House adjourned at 1757.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|--|
| Adams, Peter | Peterborough | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment |
| Allen, Richard | Hamilton West | NDP | |
| Ballinger, William G. | Durham-York | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Beer, Hon Charles | York North | L | Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. | Muskoka-Georgian Bay | L | Minister of Tourism and Recreation, minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Bossy, Maurice L. | Chatham-Kent | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Bradley, Hon James J. | St Catharines | L | Minister of the Environment |
| Brandt, Andrew S. | Sarnia | PC | Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party |
| Breaugh, Michael J. | Oshawa | NDP | First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Brown, Michael A. | Algoma-Manitoulin | L | |
| Bryden, Marion | Beaches-Woodbine | NDP | |
| Callahan, Robert V. | Brampton South | L | |
| Campbell, Sterling | Sudbury | L | |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor | Oriole | L | Minister of Health |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. | Oakville South | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Charlton, Brian A. | Hamilton Mountain | NDP | |
| Chiarelli, Robert | Ottawa West | L | |
| Cleary, John C. | Cornwall | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Collins, Hon Shirley | Wentworth East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. | Renfrew North | L | Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities, Minister of Skills Development |
| Cooke, David R. | Kitchener | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Citizenship |
| Cooke, David S. | Windsor-Riverside | NDP | House leader |
| Cordiano, Joseph | Lawrence | L | |
| Cousens, W. Donald | Markham | PC | |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. | London North | PC | |
| Cureatz, Sam L. | Durham East | PC | Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Curling, Alvin | Scarborough North | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Daigeler, Hans | Nepean | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Revenue |
| Dietsch, Michael M. | St Catharines-Brock | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour |
| Eakins, John F. | Victoria-Haliburton | L | |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. | Perth | L | Speaker |
| Elliot, R. Walter | Halton North | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Housing |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. | Bruce | L | Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Financial Institutions |
| Epp, Herbert A. | Waterloo North | L | |
| Eves, Ernie L. | Parry Sound | PC | House leader |
| Farnan, Michael | Cambridge | NDP | |
| Faubert, Frank | Scarborough-Ellesmere | L | |
| Fawcett, Joan M. | Northumberland | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Skills Development |
| Ferraro, Rick E. | Guelph | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|---|
| Fleet, David | High Park-Swansea | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Fontaine, Hon René | Cochrane North | L | Minister of Northern Development |
| Fulton, Ed | Scarborough East | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation |
| Furlong, Allan W. | Durham Centre | L | |
| Grandmaître, Bernard C. | Ottawa East | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health |
| Grier, Ruth A. | Etobicoke-Lakeshore | NDP | |
| Haggerty, Ray | Niagara South | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| Hampton, Howard | Rainy River | NDP | |
| Harris, Michael D. | Nipissing | PC | |
| Hart, Hon Christine E. | York East | L | Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Henderson, D. James | Etobicoke-Humber | L | Parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Hošek, Chaviva | Oakwood | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet |
| Jackson, Cameron | Burlington South | PC | |
| Johnson, Jack | Wellington | PC | |
| Johnston, Richard F. | Scarborough West | NDP | |
| Kanter, Ron | St Andrew-St Patrick | L | |
| Kerrio, Vincent G. | Niagara Falls | L | |
| Keyes, Kenneth A. | Kingston and The Islands | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education |
| Kormos, Peter | Welland-Thorold | NDP | |
| Kozyra, Taras B. | Port Arthur | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Northern Development |
| Kwinter, Hon Monte | Wilson Heights | L | Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Laughren, Floyd | Nickel Belt | NDP | |
| LeBourdais, Linda | Etobicoke West | L | |
| Leone, Laureano | Downsview | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Lipsett, Ron | Grey | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy |
| Lupusella, Tony | Dovercourt | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Government Services |
| MacDonald, Keith | Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings | L | |
| Mackenzie, Bob | Hamilton East | NDP | |
| Mahoney, Steven W. | Mississauga West | L | |
| Mancini, Hon Remo | Essex South | L | Minister of Revenue |
| Marland, Margaret | Mississauga South | PC | |
| Martel, Shelley | Sudbury East | NDP | |
| Matrundola, Gino | Willowdale | L | |
| McCague, George R. | Simcoe West | PC | |
| McClelland, Carman | Brampton North | L | |
| McGuigan, James F. | Essex-Kent | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| McLean, Allan K. | Simcoe East | PC | |
| McLeod, Hon Lyn | Fort William | L | Minister of Energy, Minister of Natural Resources |
| Miclash, Frank | Kenora | L | |
| Miller, Gordon I. | Norfolk | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation |
| Morin, Hon Gilles E. | Carleton East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Morin-Strom, Karl E. | Sault Ste Marie | NDP | |
| Neumann, David E. | Brantford | L | |
| Nicholas, Cindy | Scarborough Centre | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Solicitor General |
| Nixon, J. Bradford | York Mills | L | |
| Nixon, Hon Robert F. | Brant-Haldimand | L | Deputy Premier, Treasurer of Ontario, Minister of Economics |
| Oddie Munro, Lily | Hamilton Centre | L | |
| Offer, Hon Steven | Mississauga North | L | Solicitor General |
| O'Neil, Hon Hugh P. | Quinte | L | Minister of Mines |
| O'Neill, Yvonne | Ottawa-Rideau | L | |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|---|
| Owen, Bruce | Simcoe Centre | L | |
| Patten, Hon Richard | Ottawa Centre | L | Minister of Correctional Services |
| Pelissero, Harry E. | Lincoln | L | |
| Peterson, Hon David R. | London Centre | L | Premier, President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Philip, Ed | Etobicoke-Rexdale | NDP | |
| Phillips, Hon Gerry | Scarborough-Agincourt | L | Minister of Labour |
| Poirier, Jean | Prescott and Russell | L | Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Pollock, Jim | Hastings-Peterborough | PC | |
| Polsinelli, Claudio | Yorkview | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General |
| Poole, Dianne | Eglinton | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Pope, Alan W. | Cochrane South | PC | |
| Pouliot, Gilles | Lake Nipigon | NDP | |
| Rae, Bob | York South | NDP | Leader of the Official Opposition |
| Ramsay, Hon David | Timiskaming | L | Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Ray, Michael C. | Windsor-Walkerville | L | |
| Reville, David | Riverdale | NDP | Chief whip |
| Reycraft, Douglas R. | Middlesex | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Treasurer and Minister of Economics |
| Riddell, Jack | Huron | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources |
| Roberts, Marietta L. D. | Elgin | L | |
| Runciman, Robert W. | Leeds-Grenville | PC | |
| Ruprecht, Tony | Parkdale | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services |
| Scott, Hon Ian G. | St George-St David | L | Attorney General |
| Smith, David W. | Lambton | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Correctional Services |
| Smith, E. Joan | London South | L | Chief government whip |
| Sola, John | Mississauga East | L | |
| Sorbara, Hon Gregory S. | York Centre | L | Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| South, Larry | Frontenac-Addington | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Mines |
| Sterling, Norman W. | Carleton | PC | |
| Stoner, Norah | Durham West | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities |
| Sullivan, Barbara | Halton Centre | L | |
| Sweeney, Hon John | Kitchener-Wilmot | L | Minister of Housing and Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Tatham, Charlie | Oxford | L | |
| Velshi, Murad | Don Mills | L | |
| Villeneuve, Noble | Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry | PC | Chief whip |
| Ward, Hon Christopher C. | Wentworth North | L | Minister of Government Services, government House leader |
| Wildman, Bud | Algoma | NDP | |
| Wilson, Hon Mavis | Dufferin-Peel | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Wiseman, Douglas J. | Lanark-Renfrew | PC | |
| Wong, Hon Robert C. | Fort York | L | Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for the Ontario Human Rights Commission, minister responsible for multiculturalism, minister responsible for race relations |
| Wrye, Hon William | Windsor-Sandwich | L | Minister of Transportation |
| Vacant | Ottawa South | | |

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Administration of justice: chair, Mr Chiarelli; vice-chair, Mr McClelland; members, Messrs D. R. Cooke, Hampton, Kanter, Kormos, Miss Nicholas, Messrs Polsinelli, Runciman, D. W. Smith and Sterling; clerk, Douglas Arnott.

Estimates: chair, Mr McCague; vice-chair, Mr Cousens; members, Messrs Charlton, Cleary, Henderson, Matrundola, Miclash, Philip, Miss Roberts, Mrs. E. J. Smith and Mr Villeneuve; clerk, Harold Brown.

Finance and economic affairs: chair, Mr Mahoney; vice-chair, Mr Faubert; members, Mrs Cunningham, Messrs Daigeler, Ferraro, Haggerty, Ms Hošek, Messrs Mackenzie, McLean, Morin-Strom and Reycraft; clerk, Lisa Freedman.

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Social development: chair, Mrs O'Neill; vice-chair, Mrs Fawcett; members, Mr Allen, Mrs Cunningham, Messrs Elliot, Grandmaître, Jackson, Neumann, R. F. Johnston, Keyes and Mrs Stoner; clerk, Todd Decker.

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Energy: chair, Mrs Sullivan; vice-chair, Mr Brown; members, Messrs Callahan, Charlton, D. R. Cooke, Cureatz, Mrs Grier, Messrs Kerrio, McGuigan, Pollock and M. C. Ray; clerk, Todd Decker.

Special Committee

Parliamentary precinct: co-chairs, Hon Mr Edighoffer and Mr Epp; members, Mr Pouliot, Mrs Smith and Mr Villeneuve; clerk, Smirle Forsyth.

CONTENTS

Monday 30 April 1990

Members' statements

| | |
|---|-----|
| Court facilities | 901 |
| Mr Kormos | |
| Arbour Week | 901 |
| Mrs Marland | |
| Rail transportation | 901 |
| Mr Tatham | |
| Donald Smiley | 901 |
| Mr Allen | |
| Disabled students | 902 |
| Mr Sterling | |
| Plastics recycling | 902 |
| Mr Neumann | |
| Timber management | 902 |
| Mr Hampton | |
| Northern Ontario artists | 902 |
| Mr Eves | |
| Anniversary of the state of Israel | 902 |
| Mr Kanter | |

Statements by the ministry

| | |
|--|-----|
| Toronto waterfront | 903 |
| Mr Sweeney | |
| Child protection | 903 |
| Mr Beer | |
| Travel industry compensation fund | 904 |
| Mr Sorbara | |

Responses

| | |
|--|-----|
| Travel industry compensation fund | 904 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Toronto waterfront | 904 |
| Mr Reville | |
| Child protection | 905 |
| Mr Allen | |
| Travel industry compensation fund | 905 |
| Mr Runciman | |
| Child protection | 905 |
| Mr Runciman | |
| Toronto waterfront | 905 |
| Mr McCague | |

Oral questions

| | |
|---|-----|
| Automobile insurance | 905 |
| Mr Kormos | |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mr Peterson | |
| Non-profit housing | 906 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Mr Peterson | |
| Patricia Starr inquiry | 907 |
| Mr Brandt | |
| Mr Peterson | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Corporate taxes | 908 |
| Mr Laughren | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Automobile insurance | 908 |
| Mr Runciman | |
| Mr Elston | |
| Economic outlook | 909 |
| Mr Brandt | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |
| Wage protection | 909 |
| Mr Tatham | |
| Mr Phillips | |
| Unemployment in Windsor area | 910 |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | |
| Mr Kwinter | |
| Zebra mussels | 910 |
| Mr Cureatz | |
| Mrs McLeod | |
| Police services | 911 |
| Mr Miller | |
| Mr Offer | |
| Transportation of hazardous materials | 911 |
| Mrs Grier | |
| Mr Bradley | |
| Children's health services | 912 |
| Mrs Marland | |
| Mrs Caplan | |
| Occupational health and safety | 912 |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | |
| Mr Phillips | |
| Assistance to farmers | 913 |
| Mr Wildman | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | |

First readings

| | |
|--|-----|
| City of Brampton Act, 1990, Bill Pr43 | 913 |
| Mr Callahan | |
| Agreed to | |
| Silayan Filipino Community Centre Act, 1990, | |
| Bill Pr72 | 913 |
| Mr Velshi | |
| Agreed to | |

Budget debate

| | |
|--|-----|
| Resuming the adjourned debate | 913 |
| Mr Matrundola | 914 |
| Mr Brandt | 914 |
| Mr Charlton | 923 |
| Mr Ballinger | 927 |
| Adjourned | 932 |

Other business

| | |
|---|-----|
| Business of the House | 932 |
| Mr Elston | |
| Adjournment | 932 |
| Alphabetical list of members | 933 |

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Le Lundi 30 avril 1990

Déclaration ministérielle

| | |
|---|-----|
| Protection des enfants | 903 |
| M. Beer | |

CA20N
A1
-D23



26 90

26 90

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 1 May 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le mardi 1 mai 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Languages in Hansard

Hansard reports all debates in English or French as spoken by the participants. It does not translate remarks made in either language. Headings and tables of contents reflect language use.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 1 May 1990

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

VICTIMS OF CRIME

Mr Allen: It is the victims of crime who are often the last served. Since 1985, community representatives in Hamilton-Wentworth have been seeking ways to establish access to comprehensive services by victims of crime. There have been surveys, forums, planning committees, examinations of systems in other communities.

Hamilton itself has a rich network of social services, some of which serve the needs of parts of the traditional clientele of victim services programs: a sexual assault centre, shelters for abused women, victim/witness assistance, the Council on Road Trauma and bereavement services of various kinds.

The problem has been how to facilitate access to these and other agencies by a broader range of victims. A proposal has been made for a program that would offer 24-hour, seven-day-a-week, one-stop service that would instantly refer victims or their representatives to the appropriate agency and would provide both immediate, at-the-scene crisis intervention and such follow-up support as is needed to be sure all necessary linkages have been made.

The region has allocated its funding for two years, but to date this group has been unable to use that money because the Liberal government has been unwilling to provide its share of the support. Surely that is simply an oversight by the Minister of Community and Social Services and the Attorney General. They can hardly think victim services are adequate or that victims do not deserve it; so where is the funding? Our region is waiting.

TIMBER LICENCE

Mr Pollock: I would like to draw to the attention of both the Premier and the Minister of Natural Resources the following resolution passed by the council of Bangor, Wicklow and McClure:

"That the council of the corporation of the united townships of Bangor, Wicklow and McClure send a letter to the Minister of Natural Resources and to the Premier for the province of Ontario, requesting a positive reply to the request of Robert Bury of Canada Ltd to purchase the crown timber licences of G. W. Martin Lumber Ltd in order to complete the sale of the G. W. Martin property at Harcourt, Ontario.

"This transfer of the crown timber licences, which are mainly in Hastings county, would provide a great economic lift for our community because of the employment it would create. As our area is mainly relying on the forest industry for employment, this transfer of the crown timber licences would mean immediate employment and stable income for many of our local families.

"The members of council would like our area to progress and as the Robert Bury company is not asking for financial help, only the transfer of the crown timber licences, the members of council see the positive side to this transfer as an inex-

pensive economic boost to our community as well as to others in Haliburton county."

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

Mrs O'Neill: I would like to draw the attention of this House to the valuable contribution made by the Canadian Association of Toy Libraries and Parent Resource Centres and its many member groups across this province. This organization is an umbrella group which encompasses a very large variety of different programs aimed at helping parents and care givers, with its focus squarely on the enrichment of the lives of our children.

Special courses for mothers caring for children with special needs, emergency training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid are often offered, but the unstructured nature of these programs often is what makes them special. A single mother on social assistance, an isolated rural mother or an urban care giver can find a peer group whose support is a necessary pillar in her life. This kind of day-to-day support helps parents and care givers cope with the pressures and feelings of loneliness, which at times can be overwhelming.

In Ontario, over 20 mobile vans, Children's Resources on Wheels, travel into rural areas setting up play centres, toy libraries and parent education programs in church basements and community halls. This takes place where parents are unable to travel the long distances to the centre's home base. Toy-lending libraries are but one of the many things that these resources do.

WELLAND JAYCEES

Mr Kormos: The Welland Jaycees held yet another annual awards meeting in Welland this past weekend. They are a lively and active group of young people in the city of Welland whose achievements over the past decades—yes, decades—are impressive.

The Welland Jaycees have been in existence almost as long as the Jaycee movement. The presence of, among others, Doug Brown from Welland, who was one of the very earliest senators in the Jaycee movement, illustrates that. The past president, Joe Bubanko, and the new president, Dan O'Neill, have made their mark in the community. Mark Chase, one of the previous past presidents who was present, was recognized, along with Sylvain Riel as chairman of the year.

Mike Szpurko received the announcement that he had just been appointed a senator, and Marty Marko, the past president of the Thorold Jaycees, a fairly new Jaycee unit, was present to applaud the achievements of the Welland Jaycee unit. The Welland Jaycees have been active in their support of Camp Trillium, and Camp Trillium is a better place and young people's lives are rewarded as a result of that activism.

The Jaycees are a lively, charitable, aggressive movement in the city of Welland, one which is to be commended for its contribution to people within the movement as well as outside of that organization.

ORILLIA PERCH FESTIVAL

Mr McLean: My statement concerns an Orillia festival that spotlights one of the best-tasting pan fish in existence. The ninth annual Orillia Perch Festival, which runs until 13 May,

attracts thousands of anglers from the Orillia area, from throughout Ontario and even from the United States. To date, 26 of the 70 specially tagged perch worth \$1,000 each have been reeled in.

This is the ninth consecutive year that this family fishing festival has been staged by the Orillia and District Chamber of Commerce, and more than 7,000 anglers are expected to try to their luck in the waters of Lake Couchiching and Lake Simcoe. Visitors can compete for numerous prizes, including a grand prize in the adult division of a 16-foot fishing boat and trailer, along with a 25-horsepower motor; second and third prizes of boats, trailers and motors, and grand prizes in the children's division of \$1,000, \$700 and \$300 shopping sprees at a local mall. There will also be daily draws for rod and reel combinations and weekly draws for bikes, rods, reels and tackle boxes.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite each and every one of the members to come to Orillia for the ninth annual Orillia Perch Festival, and I urge them to sample one of the finest pan fish at the perch fries at Tudhope Park on 5 and 6 May. I would like to see if the Liberals are as good at hooking fish as they are at hooking the public for more taxes. Come to Orillia for some perch.

1340

TENANTS' AFTER-HOURS TELEPHONE SERVICE

Ms Poole: Members may recall that three weeks ago I raised the issue in the House that provincial funding was about to end for the after-hours telephone service operated by the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations. At the time, I suggested that an opportunity existed for the province, the city of Toronto, the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto and the federation to share the costs of the hotline.

Today I am delighted to confirm that an agreement in principle has been reached between the Ministry of Housing and the federation to extend the federation's contract to provide an after-hours information hotline for tenants. A key component of this agreement is the willingness of the municipalities to cost-share the hotline with the province.

As members are aware, the Ministry of Housing has operated a toll-free, province-wide, bilingual after-hours telephone service for the past three weeks. This service has already proven to be a great success, having assisted 552 callers from across Ontario during its first 22 days in operation. During this time, it has become apparent that some 50% of the calls being received by the ministry are coming from the Metro Toronto area.

We now have the best of both worlds: continuation of the federation's hotline plus the ministry's information service to ensure that all tenants across our great province are served.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE LEADER

Mr D. S. Cooke: Last week saw a remarkable performance by the member for Welland-Thorold. His efforts to stop the Liberal government's ill-conceived car insurance legislation, on behalf of the New Democratic Party and the people of this province, were truly outstanding. However, there was another remarkable memory from last week, and that is the performance of the government House leader.

First, on Thursday of last week, the government House leader came to the opposition House leaders and requested that we deviate from the rules and announce the business for the upcoming week right after routine proceedings because the

government House leader said he was going back to Hamilton, which was obviously not the case. Second, he announced the business for the House, which was budget debate for last week and this week. That was obviously not the case.

Clearly, if I was to describe the actions of the House leader in an accurate way I would be tossed out of the Legislature because the language would be unparliamentary. House leaders have always operated in this place in a spirit of co-operation and honesty. That is obviously not the case with the government House leader. Therefore, this morning the New Democratic Party caucus decided that we will no longer be co-operating with the government. We will not be attending House leaders' meetings because we cannot believe anything the government House leader has to say.

HOSPITAL BEDS

Mr Cureatz: In 1986 the Liberal government committed funding to enable Ajax and Pickering General Hospital to double the number of beds from 127 to 242. This promise was made on the ground that the community was able to raise \$7 million. The community raised its share months ago but has recently been informed by the Minister of Health that only 45 beds would be funded. This means that the promised 70 chronic care beds will not be built.

The Ministry of Health should be aware that the population of the area that Ajax and Pickering General serves has increased by 197% since the hospital opened in 1964. A number of health professionals in the area have expressed concern that the region does not have adequate facilities to accommodate chronic care patients.

Earlier this month the Ministry of Health received hundreds of copies of letters from the Ajax-Pickering community. Linda Kuchna, a nurse at the Ajax and Pickering General Hospital and the chairperson of the letter campaign, is visiting with us today at Queen's Park. Over 2,440 letters have been written, many by seniors who have expressed concern about the decision not to fund the 70 chronic care beds.

This is an issue that we have brought up repeatedly. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party and the Ajax-Pickering community to ask that the government honour its promise made years ago to the people of the Ajax-Pickering area.

Let me say to the member for Durham West, for whom I have nothing but the highest respect and honour, that with the election coming closer minute by minute, she should be getting up and asking questions of this administration. She should not be thinking for one moment that they are going to come across with the required funding just because she is a Liberal. She has to get up and represent her community.

EDUCATION WEEK

Mr Keyes: This is Education Week in Ontario. During this special occasion, schools are extending a very special invitation to all Ontarians to come and see education at work. I would like to acknowledge the dedication and the commitment of both students and educators from Kingston and the Islands who will be taking part in this week's special activities.

Schools in the Frontenac County Board of Education will be hosting many special events, including grandparent days, spring fairs, exhibitions in the community and a very special showcase of the arts on Friday evening of this week at KC&VI, all of these events highlighting the work of local students.

Students in the Frontenac, Lennox and Addington Separate School Board will be involved in science fairs and environmen-

tal awareness demonstrations as well as variety shows and concerts.

At a time when we are calling on our schools not only to teach the basics of learning but also to prepare our students for the increasingly complex society in which we live, it is particularly appropriate that this year's theme is Education: It's Everybody's Business. That theme, which was first used in 1936, has a new relevance in 1990, as we focus on the importance of partnerships within our educational system and the new challenges of lifelong learning.

The Minister of Education is attending many of this week's celebrations in communities throughout Ontario. I encourage all members of the Legislature to join with students and educators in their communities to experience at first hand the wonder that is learning.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYEES PERSONNEL DES SERVICES COMMUNAUTAIRES

Hon Mr Beer: I would like to inform members of the House of an additional measure announced in the budget that the government is taking to improve wages and benefits paid to social service workers employed by community agencies.

This government is committed to strengthening and improving the quality of services delivered by community-based social service agencies.

J'ai le plaisir d'informer les députés de la Chambre d'une autre mesure annoncée dans le budget et que le gouvernement vient d'entreprendre afin d'améliorer les salaires et les avantages sociaux des travailleuses et travailleurs sociaux employés par des organismes communautaires.

Ce gouvernement est fortement engagé à consolider et à améliorer la qualité des services fournis par les organismes de services sociaux communautaires.

Last year we provided \$88.8 million to improve wages, benefits and working conditions. As well, we have provided the direct operating grants to child care operators. This has significantly improved wages and benefits of workers employed in the child care field.

I am pleased today to announce that we are continuing to move in that direction. This morning it was my pleasure to meet with representatives of provincial organizations at the headquarters of the Ontario Association for Community Living. At that time I provided information on the community agency compensation funding included in last week's budget.

1350

In support of the vital role played by social service employees, we will provide \$58 million annually to community agencies to help them improve wages and benefits paid to over 20,000 workers.

These workers include community staff of children's aid societies and children's mental health centres, employees of associations for community living and other agencies delivering services for people with developmental disabilities and staff who provide services for residents of recovery homes.

Priority will be given to the lowest-paid direct care employees.

An important principle of my ministry is to recognize the community as a key partner in the planning, managing and delivery of social services. In order to plan for the distribution of this funding to community-based agencies, representatives of provincial associations and community organizations will work

together with my staff. The improvements in wages and benefits will take effect in September.

Cette initiative nous permettra d'aider nos partenaires en leur fournissant les moyens de recruter et de maintenir en poste un personnel qualifié et expérimenté grâce à des salaires compétitifs.

Nous réitérons notre ferme décision de continuer à investir dans la stabilité et la qualité des services sociaux et communautaires de l'Ontario.

This initiative will help us to lend support to our partners by providing them with the ability to recruit and retain qualified and experienced staff through the provision of competitive wages.

This in turn strengthens our commitment towards the stability and quality of Ontario's community-based social services.

WATER AND SEWAGE PROGRAMS

Hon Mr Sweeney: An adequate supply of clean drinking water and proper sewage treatment are essential to this province's future.

As a government, we have made clean water a priority. Our current water and sewer capital programs will provide \$175 million in grants and \$71 million in loans for this fiscal year. Programs such as the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement and LifeLines funding to rehabilitate old sewer and water lines have been key to meeting this province's objectives.

This government believes an expanded capital commitment to water and sewage infrastructure is required. In order to effectively meet the needs identified by individual citizens, our municipalities, environmental groups and our international obligations, this government will move quickly to establish a new crown corporation.

The corporation, to be established this fiscal year, will have a mandate to provide a secure supply of clean water at reasonable cost to the people of Ontario. The corporation will report to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who is responsible for local government finance and community planning.

The Ministry of the Environment will continue with its roles of establishing appropriate environmental standards for Ontario's water and sewage treatment plants and for continued effective scrutiny of these systems.

Policy direction to the corporation and its relationship to the government will be outlined in a memorandum of understanding. The directors of the corporation will represent a broad spectrum of interests, including those of the environmental and municipal sectors.

The corporation will make decisions that are consistent with the government's priorities to preserve and improve our environment, protect the health of people and meet the province's objectives for community planning and affordable housing.

The corporation will borrow funds guaranteed by the province to finance the upgrading, the expansion or the construction of these water and sewer systems. This will substantially increase the capital available to accelerate the rehabilitation and development of this crucial infrastructure.

The corporation will also assume responsibility for the operation of all water systems and sewage treatment plants currently operated by the province. It will build and operate new water and sewage plants in co-operation with municipalities and with the private sector.

Many municipalities in Ontario operate their own water and sewage systems very efficiently and will continue to do so. Nothing will prevent municipalities from building and operat-

ing new facilities on their own. All outstanding provincial commitments to municipalities for grants and loans for this purpose will be honoured.

I believe the creation of this crown corporation is a clear sign that this government is taking a strong leadership role in the provision of these basic and essential services today and into the future.

DISABLED PERSON PARKING PERMIT

Hon Mr Wrye: Today is an important day for Ontario citizens. The new Ontario parking permit for disabled persons is now in effect.

This morning, with my colleagues the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Solicitor General and the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs, I had the honour of presenting the first permits to representatives of disabled persons' organizations and persons with disabilities who helped us develop the program.

The new permit is portable. Therefore, disabled persons need no longer own or drive or have access to a particular vehicle, as has been the case with the disabled symbol licence plate.

The permit holder may place one of these free permits on the visor or dash of any vehicle and be entitled to use a parking space designated for disabled persons.

The permit holder is medically certified as having either a temporary or permanent disability. Therefore, many of the abuses which have occurred with the disabled symbol plate will be eliminated.

Model bylaws have been sent to all Ontario municipalities so that the permit will be uniformly recognized. There will also be a new uniform size for parking spaces for disabled persons and a standard sign to designate them.

We have reciprocal agreements with all other provinces and American states, including Florida, so permit holders will have a right to use designated parking spaces virtually everywhere they may travel in North America.

The proposed bylaw sent to municipalities and police forces will also make the penalty for misuse of designated spaces by non-disabled drivers much more severe.

There will be a six-month phase-in period during which the disabled symbol licence plate and municipal permits will also be valid. After that, only the new portable permit will be valid for parking in spaces designated for disabled persons.

We believe that the new Ontario disabled person parking permit will enhance parking convenience and broaden travel opportunities for the disabled persons of this province.

RESPONSES

WATER AND SEWAGE PROGRAMS

Mrs Grier: I would like to respond to the statement today by the Minister of Municipal Affairs about our new public utility to create a clean water and sewer system.

I thought that it was the mandate of this government to provide a secure supply of clean water. I did not think we needed a new crown corporation to do that. I thought we had the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement, supposed to be in place in 1989, that was going to clean up the discharges from our sewer systems. Do not forget, Mr Speaker, that in the 1987 election campaign we had the Liberals' election plank of the LifeLines program, which was going to rehabilitate the infrastructure, the sewage systems and the drinking water plants.

Why is that not good enough today? Why do we need a new crown corporation?

What we need is more capital to replace our infrastructure. With that, I would agree. But I still do not see why a utility is required to put that in place. The statement talks about the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who is responsible for local government finance and community planning. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs is not responsible for protecting the environment, and that is our primary concern about this shift in responsibility.

There is silence in the statement with respect to the legislation to implement this policy. We assume we are going to see legislation. What is it going to contain? We are certainly going to want to have extensive public hearings, so that we can get public comment on this shift in responsibility that the government is taking.

I think the critical phrase in this announcement occurs in the middle of the second page where it says that the utility will build and operate facilities in co-operation with municipalities and the private sector. That is what this is all about. That is what this represents.

It represents that the development industry is now going to be setting the priorities, driving the agenda and determining where the money is to be spent. That is not good enough. It does not reflect the commitment to the environment that we thought this government had. It does not reflect the announcements we keep hearing from the Minister of the Environment, who is not even here to be part of this announcement.

Where is he? Has he gone underground, now that Project X has surfaced again? The Minister of the Environment has gone underground. That is the true statement of where this government is at.

1400

DISABLED PERSON PARKING PERMIT

Mr Allen: I rise to welcome the announcement by the Minister of Transportation of the new Ontario disabled person parking permit. The disabled themselves, the Ontario Advisory Council for Disabled Persons, sponsored a report not long ago entitled *The Freedom to Move is Life Itself*, and obviously mobility is extremely important to the disabled, of all people in our society. This permit will allow them that enhanced mobility and will enable them to access and use vehicles in a much more flexible fashion and to find their way to parking spaces where they will not be ticketed, as was often the case with respect to the older licensing.

COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Allen: I would like to respond briefly to the Minister of Community and Social Services' announcement of funding for a number of the social service agencies in the community. This, of course, is welcome. It represents about \$2,900 per worker on the average—\$1.25 or \$1.50 per hour as I roughly calculate it—and of course that is helpful. I will remind the minister, however, that many of those salaries still are at a somewhat marginal level in terms of maintaining an attractive profession in each of those institutions that can maintain staff over long periods of time in order to provide the service that we expect and that the minister himself expects in the deinstitutionalization programs and other community-based work that he sponsors.

At the same time, I want to call his attention to the fact of the fundamental problem. The different collective bargaining

regimes of direct government employees on the one hand and these workers on the other are the root of the problem. I hope he would look seriously at the decision that was made with regard to the ambulance drivers, where they were considered a crown agency and in that respect had access to arbitration and the kinds of services that are available to direct employees in the government services.

If he does not follow that route, he remains, even as he tops up salaries, the ghost at the bargaining table, the unseen hand that can fix the results and then, when they do not go right, now and then come along with a rather paternalistic handout, which is not the way it should go at any self-respecting agency, as I am sure the minister would agree.

The Speaker: Before I call for further responses, I am hearing a little more with the right ear than I am with my other ear. I would appreciate it if the private conversations could be kept down.

DISABLED PERSON PARKING PERMIT

Mrs Marland: In response to the statement on the implementation of the new Ontario disabled person parking permit, I want to just say that I notice the pamphlet says the new permit is free. However, if there is a charge by the health professional providing certification, the fee is the disabled person's responsibility. Are we saying here that medical practitioners will be charging a fee for this permit? It is not at all very clear.

COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mrs Marland: In responding to the compensation adjustments for community agencies, I think we have to look very carefully at this statement. First of all, regarding the provision of \$58 million annually to community agencies, we are not sure that \$58 million will serve the critical staffing shortage that was experienced by numerous community agencies. We are always offloading on to these community-based agencies and saying that is the way of the future. It is fine to do that, but is that enough money for them to do the job properly?

Frankly, I would be interested in finding out how many of the 10,000 children on waiting lists for children's mental health services will be taken off the waiting lists as a result of this \$58 million. Last year, \$88 million was not adequate. Many community-based organizations have been losing staff to the institutional sector, such as the children's mental health and children's aid societies.

Fifty-eight million dollars is \$30 million less than was provided last year. I am not at all confident that this statement is going to mean a difference for those community agencies that are dependent on this government; if they are going to have to do the job, they are going to need money to do that job.

WATER AND SEWAGE PROGRAMS

Mrs Marland: I was particularly interested in the statement today by the Minister of Municipal Affairs, because when he spoke to the AMO large urban section in Windsor on Thursday night, he said that this new water and sewer utility probably would take 10 to 12 months to get off the ground. It is interesting that after that statement, which seemed to indicate that the government had made this announcement but really did not know how it was going to work, at least today we have a statement giving some suggestions about how it might work.

This statement says that this provincial government is taking a strong leadership role in the provision of these ser-

vices, but actually what it shows is that the provincial government does not want to take responsibility, and instead it is sending it off to an arm's-length government agency. Here again the province is opting out of its responsibilities, so it sets up a new crown corporation and says, "Here, you look after it." The fact that the corporation will provide a buffer between the government and the municipalities is exactly what is going to happen.

We are also very concerned about the environmental aspects. Frankly, we feel that the loss of \$341 million from the Ministry of the Environment to this crown corporation has to be a very significant reduction in the MOE's budget. We agree that there is more support needed for water and sewer infrastructure renewal. The words "infrastructure renewal" are nowhere to be found in this statement.

DISABLED PERSON PARKING PERMIT

Mr McCague: The statement by the Minister of Transportation is welcome and I am sure the municipalities were looking for that. It is an unusual statement in that it does not impose any cost penalties on municipalities, as do most of the government statements these days.

WATER AND SEWAGE PROGRAMS

Mr McCague: The Minister of Municipal Affairs has made his announcement about this crown corporation. I just hope he is not going to saddle the municipalities with more of the cost than has been the norm when it was under the Minister of the Environment. There is always a hidden agenda here, and I am afraid that between the municipalities and the developers, they are going to have to pay more and houses are going to cost much, much more, even around Strathroy.

ORAL QUESTIONS

BUDGET

Mr B. Rae: In the absence of the Premier, I have a question for the Treasurer. It is becoming clearer, I think, to everyone except for the Treasurer that he produced a truly irresponsible budget, in that it was a document that completely neglected the fact that a good deal of the provincial economy is already in a recession, that the number of bankruptcies in the province is up dramatically over last year and that we are now into the third month of negative growth in the province.

I want to ask the Treasurer this question: Can he tell us why in his budget, in addition to doing nothing on the housing front in terms of new programs, he himself increased training for workers by only some \$11 million, which is 0.02% of the provincial budget, two tenths of one per cent of the provincial budget? Why would he be leaving workers who are affected by unemployment with absolutely no protection in terms of new training programs dealing with a future recession?

Hon R. F. Nixon: The honourable member and some of his colleagues persist in referring to the budget as something that does not provide anything for housing. The honourable member would be aware that it provides funding for 17,000 non-profit starts this year. This is, I think, the largest number of starts in our history.

The honourable member may have an approach to public pronouncements that has to do more with political impact than fact. In this instance, he would be aware that over the five years we have been in office—frankly, his own views had something to do with the beginnings of these matters—our policies in housing have meant that our application of additional funds has

increased that budget by almost 250% in the five years we have been in office, the largest growth of any ministry over which we have had a responsibility.

I just want to bring that to the honourable member's attention so that he will stop repeating something that is not correct: that this budget does not provide for housing. It provides for 17,000 new non-profit starts.

1410

Mr B. Rae: If the Treasurer will just calm down for a moment and try to answer the question—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr B. Rae: In 1989—and there is no recognition of this fact in the budget; it is almost a kind of fantasy document—more workers were hit by layoffs than in any year since 1983. That is a fact. That is a hard fact, but it is a fact nevertheless.

The other fact the Treasurer has to contend with is that the government has not moved on pension legislation, the government has not moved in any degree with respect to training. Workers are no better off with respect to training than they were before. They are no better off with respect to the indexing question than they were before. Why is the Treasurer sending the workers of this province into a recession without any new protection in terms of the laws of this province? Why is he doing that?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I know the honourable member would have listened carefully as the budget was read and perused the tables that accompany the document. He would be aware that the plan for the growth of the economy this year—and I admit that the growth is not large; estimated to be 1.7%—will, we expect, provide over 60,000 net new jobs in the province. We expect that rate of growth, although it is slower than we have experienced over the last four years, to maintain Ontario's position as having the lowest level of unemployment of any province in Canada. It could be better, but it is the best there is.

Mr B. Rae: That kind of complacency will get the Treasurer nowhere. I want him to recognize the fact that the number of bankruptcies has grown more rapidly in Ontario than in any other part of Canada outside Atlantic Canada. I want to ask the Treasurer why it would be that his Minister of Labour yesterday would say there is nothing his government can or will do about bankruptcies when, back in 1985, the same minister told the *Toronto Star* that he "can and will go ahead with provincial legislation this spring"—that is to say, the spring of 1986—"if Ottawa fails to act".

We are beginning to understand what a Liberal commitment means. It is something we are having to learn and relearn every day. His minister, four and a half years ago, said they were going to be moving to protect workers who were affected by bankruptcy. We now know there are more and more of those workers every day. Why would the government not keep a promise it made over four and a half years ago?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I believe that most reasonable people believe and understand that the high interest rates that are part of the policy of the government of Canada are having a negative effect on our economy. It is our belief, however, that the strength and resiliency of the Ontario economy can withstand for a substantial period of time these onsets of federal policy and the bad effects that we are experiencing.

In spite of the fact that we are committed to the strength of our economy, the honourable member will know that we have

substantially improved the attractiveness of this jurisdiction for investment, both from businesses and entrepreneurs within this province and Canada and also from the international market, we have improved our current cost adjustment by doubling it to 30%. This puts us in a very competitive position.

The honourable member would be aware, having read, for example, the Quebec budget, that right in its budget there is an indication that the improvement of Ontario's position—that is, even without the changes in our own budget—leaves us with an advantage that is just under 4%, for people who are looking at comparative numbers vis-à-vis the province of Quebec.

Mr B. Rae: The most important investment we have in this province is people's jobs. That is the investment the Treasurer is not protecting.

RENT REVIEW

Mr B. Rae: I would like to ask the Minister of Housing a question about rent review. It concerns a 60-unit apartment building in North York, 4918 Bathurst Street, which is owned by Bath-Finch Apartments.

On 28 March 1990, the Liberal government's rent review system awarded the landlord a rent increase of nearly 29%. A good part of the reason for this was the replacement of all 60 fridges and stoves in the building—every single one of them. Does the minister think it is some sort of coincidence that all the fridges and stoves needed replacement all at the same time? Can the minister explain why one generation of tenants would be faced with this kind of increase? Why would he be doing that?

Hon Mr Sweeney: I think the honourable Leader of the Opposition would recognize that we are not doing it. The landlord is responsible for managing his or her own building. There are times, I assume, when it is more economical for all the tenants in the building to have the units replaced, because of a volume discount, as opposed to having a certain number of tenants having to pay a much higher rent simply because a smaller number of units would be replaced. However, I would remind him that the new regulation I introduced very recently does deal with that and now requires the support of the tenant in order to make those in-suite changes.

Mr B. Rae: The hard reality is that as a result of the loopholes in the government's legislation—not simply in the regulations but in the legislation—in addition to leaving workers unarmed as we head into a recession, it is also leaving tenants unarmed to deal with the obvious greed of landlords and the kinds of increases that are being imposed.

Another example for the minister is 147-175 Barrington Avenue in East York, which is a 252-unit apartment building and town-house complex owned by Double Z Investments Ltd. The landlord here is applying for rent increases of 25% to 30% based on the same capital expenditure giveaway. The irony of this is that this building was built as a low-interest building; it was built as a limited-dividend building under CMHC.

For these people who moved into an apartment on the basis of its being a fair and square deal some 10 or 15 years ago, many of whom are now on a fixed income, why would the minister be allowing a landlord in one year to impose a rent increase of as much as 30%? Why would the minister allow that?

Hon Mr Sweeney: The honourable leader will be aware of the fact that most of those limited-dividend building agreements with CMHC were for a 15-year period. I presume there will be

a number of those that will be coming off that particular program. As a matter of fact, in one situation in either Stoney Creek or Waterdown—I cannot remember, but one of the two—one of the local non-profit agencies asked if we would assist it to acquire such a building, and we agreed in that particular case.

The other point the honourable member would be aware of is that in fact this government, through its rent supplement program, does subsidize the rent of people living in some of those limited-dividend buildings. But I would go back to my original point: that was a federal agreement that does expire in 15 years and we do not have any control over that.

Mr B. Rae: The Minister of Housing does have control over the rent review system. The minister knows perfectly well that as a result of the loopholes in his system on refinancing and on capital expenditure, tenants in these buildings and in other buildings are being hit with increases of 25% to 30%.

I want to ask the minister a very basic question. Does he think it fair or right that a 67-year-old widow living on a fixed income should be asked to bear an increase of 30% in one year? Is that fair? Yes or no?

Hon Mr Sweeney: The system we have here in Ontario, which I know is not acceptable to the New Democratic Party because it wants to go to rent controls, is a system of rent review, and the system of rent review is that legitimate costs can be passed through. The only other alternative is that we move to something called rent control. I would only ask my honourable friend to look at New York City to see what rent controls have done there; you see street after street of boarded-up buildings. We do not want that in Ontario.

1420

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Mr Brandt: My question is for the Treasurer, as well. The Treasurer indicated yesterday, in response to a question, that he felt the Ontario economy was not going into a recession. The numbers that the Treasurer proposed in his budget indicated a series of steps that were necessary in order to bring in a reasonably balanced budget, one of which was a \$200-million in-year cut throughout the ministries, which is not unlike the step the Treasurer has taken on previous occasions.

I would like to point out to the Treasurer, with respect to the whole question of the problems in the Ontario economy, a number of headlines that I think reinforce the concern I have expressed to him about the condition of the economic situation in this province at the present time. This is the Financial Post: "The Roof Falls in on House Sales." The Financial Post again: "Corporate Profits Plunge 26%."

Interjection.

Mr Brandt: I am glad to see the Attorney General is back. We would not be able to survive without his interjections.

The Toronto Star: "Recession Comes a Step Closer." The Toronto Sun: "Recession Looms."

Does the Treasurer still stand by the figures he has forecast in his budget with respect to attempting to balance the books this year?

Hon R. F. Nixon: Yes. But the honourable member, in quoting the scariest headlines he could find with regard to the economy, has pointed out the situation that has reflected the current monetary policy of the government of Canada. He will recall that Michael Wilson, the federal Minister of Finance, just two months ago projected that interest rates would be about

11% on average this year. Our projections are for higher interest rates than that and we still feel that our projections can be met. But the indications are that if the present trend is not contained there are going to be very serious difficulties with the budget of Canada. We hope, however, that we can maintain our position in a reasonable way during this fiscal year.

Mr Brandt: On the basis of comparing March to March, in the past year the economy of Ontario has lost something in the order of 34,000 manufacturing jobs. What the Treasurer did to aggravate that situation was to introduce the employer health levy, which has cost industries and business in this province multibillions of dollars starting 1 January 1990, at the very time that the economy is going into a rather substantial recession, if we can believe the headlines of these very worthy newspapers. Of course, the Treasurer says it is selective reading.

Here is the Toronto Star, and here is the Toronto Sun, in case there is one newspaper that he happens to favour over another, for whatever reason. I will get the Brantford Expositor, and the Brantford Expositor will say exactly what I am saying to the Treasurer: that the employer health levy should not have been introduced. Why would he do that at a time when the Ontario economy is into a very severe slide?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I know that you, Mr Speaker, and other reasonable residents of Ontario welcome the abolition of medicare premiums. They were regressive and as a party that keeps its political promises we felt in the last budget it was an appropriate change.

The employer health tax was designed to be equivalent to the costs of the old premiums that were payable under the old Tory regime which we have abolished and which we are going to keep abolished. We think it is important to remember that the stimulation to the economy of almost \$1 million in the pockets of the residents of Ontario this very year is stimulative to the economy and not depressing, and therefore has the good effect that both the honourable member and myself would desire.

Mr Brandt: The Treasurer knows full well that is a tax on payroll that has nothing to do with profits. It is an unfair tax. In addition to that, in the last five years he has doubled the expenditures of the Ontario economy to some \$45 billion.

I will tell the Treasurer who benefited from his employer health levy. Many professionals, self-employed, earning \$50,000, \$100,000, \$150,000 a year do not even pay his employer health levy; they escape that since they do not have any employees and do not have any payroll.

The unfairness of that tax is self-evident, but why would the Treasurer at this particular time increase expenditures again some 7%–6.8% to be entirely accurate; I rounded the number, as the Treasurer himself is wont to do on occasion. In order to be completely and entirely accurate, why would the Treasurer increase expenditures 6.8% at a time when the economy is obviously into a recessionary period and when the—

The Speaker: Order.

Hon R. F. Nixon: For a number of reasons. One of the largest increases was \$1.5 billion for health services, and the honourable member knows that he has been urging additional expenditures on us. I have even heard him say that was not enough. The member for Parry Sound gets quite exercised about its inadequacy. But the honourable member prides himself on his conservatism, which is of special interest knowing the honourable member's antecedents, but surely even on that basis he would want to support our initiative, which actually doubles the current cost allowance, which stimulates busi-

nesses, gives them an opportunity to improve their investments in this great jurisdiction so they can not only make jobs but strengthen our economy and make a profit.

Mr Eves: I have a question for the Minister of Health—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Perhaps this might be the appropriate time to have a little break in the question period.

PRIME MINISTER OF LITHUANIA

The Speaker: I would like to ask all members of the assembly to recognize, in the Speaker's gallery, the Prime Minister of Lithuania, Dr Kazimiera Prunskiene.

If it is still agreeable to discontinue the question period for a few more minutes, I understand that a member from each of the parties would like to welcome her, so I will now recognize one member from each of the parties for words of welcome.

Mr Fleet: It is a great pleasure and honour for me, on behalf of my party and indeed on behalf of people throughout the province, to welcome the Prime Minister and her delegation here to the Ontario Legislature.

The Prime Minister has had an opportunity to meet with the Premier and with other members of the Legislature. She is somebody who I and other members, when visiting Lithuania, had a chance to talk to. I must say that she is an economist, but she is particularly forward-thinking, very much open to seeing change take place in Lithuania. She is at the leading edge of that change, partly because of her founding role as a member of the Lithuanian reform movement, Sajudis, but also as a founder of the women's movement in Lithuania. She is particularly highly regarded by her peers in Sajudis, and in fact by people on the street in Lithuania, something I was able to ascertain when I was there and talking to so many people.

1430

It is quite clear that Lithuania is resolutely determined to pursue its independence, to pursue a very difficult course of self-determination, but it is doing so in a completely non-violent way, very much in the tradition of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, and despite the ongoing blockade of the Soviets.

Prime Minister, I say to you that we hope your presence here will help focus international attention on the ongoing struggle in Lithuania and help bring the Kremlin to the negotiating table for real and meaningful discussions to help you pursue and achieve your goal of total independence.

I would also like to say that the discussions that the Prime Minister had with the Premier, in keeping with both of their natures, were quite animated, both in a private meeting and literally at the lunch table. They hardly stopped to eat, discussing a variety of issues pertaining to both Canada and Lithuania and other countries in eastern Europe.

One of the things that was commented on by the Premier was the fact that in relative terms, relative to her situation, politics around here are really quite dull. The Prime Minister was quick to reply, "Here's to dullness." She would very much like to achieve that measure of political success. I think in due course she will.

I would also like to say, on behalf of the people in Ontario, that we look forward to being able in this Legislature and in this government to facilitate the kind of person-to-person contact that started today with you, Prime Minister, and the Premier, and indeed with all the members of the delegation and others

who were at the luncheon and whom you will be meeting this week, to facilitate the institution-to-institution contact for the long-range benefit of the country of Lithuania as well as Ontario and Canada. The Premier has indicated a willingness to continue to pursue that, as you both indicated, in concrete terms.

The other thing that took place in the meeting was that the Prime Minister has invited the Premier to go to Lithuania. Given some speculation about elections here, I do not know how quickly that will be, but I know that he looks forward to it.

Also, the Premier has indicated that the initiatives that were commented on by you, Prime Minister, that have been undertaken by my colleague the member for Oakwood will be continued and the Premier has asked me to take some special responsibility in respect of Lithuania. I look forward to doing that.

I know in addition that it is particularly important to have you here for the Lithuanian Canadian community. I know that all members of this Legislature would join with me in congratulating the members of the Lithuanian Canadian community, not only for facilitating in many ways this visit by you, Prime Minister, but also because of the long-standing support it has given and continues to give to the cause of freedom. Lithuania is important in and of itself, of course, but also it has great importance for people in other states within the Soviet Union and throughout the world. It is a great symbol of determination, a great symbol of achievement so far and achievement shortly to be fully realized with independence.

Again, on behalf of my party and on behalf of the people of Ontario, congratulations so far. We are delighted that you are here. We trust you will enjoy our hospitality fully. We look forward to every success.

Mr Cureatz: I have asked, and very kindly the leader of the official opposition has allowed me, to speak next so it will give him an opportunity to sum up, since he has had a personal contact in Lithuania. I have a very brief statement and a couple of personal notes. I will read it, as unaccustomed as I am, slowly, so that the interpreter might have the opportunity to keep up.

I am delighted to welcome the Prime Minister of Lithuania today and extend to her the good wishes of the Progressive Conservative Party. We in Ontario have been impressed by the determination of the people of Lithuania in their struggle for independence, the struggle to control their own destiny. They have demonstrated what a united and confident people can achieve.

The Prime Minister is in Canada to appeal for assistance in sustaining the country in the face of economic pressure being brought to bear by Moscow. The Prime Minister will have to use all her considerable negotiating skills to bring her country safely through the coming talks with the officials in the Kremlin. We all hope for a successful outcome to the negotiations, and our country should lend its support in every way possible to make sure that the people of Lithuania will be able to retain their precious freedom.

Might I conclude by indicating that I had the privilege of being one of the observers for the Ontario-Canadian observer team for the first free elections in Lithuania, and I can assure all members that with what I saw of the strength and confidence of the people of Lithuania, I have every reason to believe that eventually their hopes and dreams of freedom will unfold as they desire.

Last, I would like to thank the Premier very much for his graciousness in allowing me the opportunity during lunch to interrupt his conversation so that I might speak with the Prime

Minister. It so happens that a very attractive interpreter from Lithuania was with me in Lithuania and I have not been able to keep contact with her because of the difficulty. I asked the Prime Minister to deliver a personal letter, and I appreciate the Premier allowing me that discussion.

Mr B. Rae: Because of the Holocaust, my wife's family and I have no living relatives in Lithuania, but my wife and I were able to visit just a few short weeks ago the villages and towns in which my wife's family and mine at one time lived. We also had the chance, thanks to the leadership of my colleague the member for Scarborough West, to visit a country in the middle of an election.

We have all seen elections. Indeed, everyone in this room has been in one. I want to tell members that when we were in Lithuania we saw an election that we could understand and recognize, people voting democratically. Indeed, I was able to speak to an all-candidates meeting. As I spoke to one in Vilnius, I suspected that it was certainly not something that I would have ever anticipated doing a year ago, having an opportunity to speak to a group of Lithuanian citizens on the eve of their election.

Much has been said since that election and much has been written by various people and by various leaders about the situation there. On behalf of the members of the New Democratic Party, I want to say to members of the House that we all share in this room a commitment to some very basic values. That is what makes politics in our province possible. Perhaps the most fundamental of those values is freedom: the central idea that people living together who make a country and a culture should be able to determine their own future and should be able to determine how it is that they want to live.

The people of Lithuania have been living under a dictatorship. There is no other way to describe it. Since 11 March, they have been struggling to create a democracy. Any person who values freedom respects, admires and must encourage the will to freedom that we have seen in Lithuania and that we have seen in all the Baltic countries.

I want the Prime Minister to know that we saw there a free election and a people determined to find their way back to national independence. That is the message that I have been trying to bring to the people of this province and the people of Canada since my return. I believe it very profoundly.

1440

I would also like to tell the Prime Minister two other things. The first is that her countrymen who have come to this country have made an enormous contribution. We are a country that is made up of immigrants. We have come here in many different ways, in different boats, but, if I may say so, we are all in the same boat right now.

I would also like to say to the Prime Minister that I hope she takes a message back to her own country. I do not know what official meetings she has had, I do not know what official meetings she may have in the future, in the days ahead in Canada and in the United States, but she should know that whatever temporization there may be by some, the basic instinct of the people of this country is to provide support—not just moral support, but practical help.

I would say to members of this House and say to the government, there are things we could be doing, there are steps we could take, in terms of the management skills and the practical kinds of assistance that a country struggling to

create a democracy is going to need. Every Canadian wishes for negotiations. Every Canadian wishes those negotiations to succeed. Every Canadian, I believe, wishes that Lithuania will be free.

[Remarks in Lithuanian]

Long live a free Lithuania.

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I wondered, because of my personal family connections with Lithuania and the work I have done with this chamber in Lithuania, if I might be allowed to add a few comments as well, if there is unanimous consent.

Agreed to.

Mr R. F. Johnston: It is an extraordinary request and I appreciate the House allowing me to say a few words of welcome to the Prime Minister.

This is a very proud day for every Canadian Lithuanian and those of us who are connected by marriage to the community to have you representing your country here today.

I have here a quote from Vaclav Havel from Czechoslovakia: "A person who cannot move and live a somewhat normal life because he is pinned under a boulder has more time to think about his hopes than someone who is not trapped this way."

Lithuanians have been under a boulder since they were taken over because of the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement in 1940, a boulder which has affected every family including that which I have married into. Not one family has not been affected by the deportations to Siberia, wherefrom members of their families never came back, and lived and suffered under a regime which, as my leader says, can only be seen as a dictatorship of the worst sort. It has grieved me greatly in these last few weeks, since 11 March, to see the reluctance of western democracies and western leadership to come to the support of Lithuania in a strong and meaningful way. Vaclav Havel also said about our democracies that we still do not know how to put morality ahead of politics, science and economy. I believe that is the case with our government, with Bush's government and with the western governments at this point.

I thank the Premier of our province for perhaps going farther than our protocol officers would want us to go, given the somewhat nebulous support that our federal government is giving the Lithuanian struggle at this point, by hosting you here today, but I would have hoped that we might have stood up here, as members who believe in democracy and who believe in freedom, and said that this would have been an ideal time to have this Prime Minister address this House as, for instance, Archbishop Tutu did, representing another profound principle that we believe in. I regret that we are not able to have that courage to do so today, but I encourage every member of this House who signed the petition saying that they would be willing to work in support of Lithuania to now start to meet regularly and find practical ways that we, as individual parliamentarians, can change the political dynamic in this province, in this country and hopefully in the western democracies to give more support to Lithuania as it recreates the government and democracy and country that it deserves to have. I thank you for allowing me to say so.

The Speaker: We will now return to oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HOSPITAL FINANCING

Mr Eves: As I was saying, I have a question of the Minister of Health. I want to bring to the minister's attention an issue that I brought to her attention exactly one week ago today, and that is the problem at the Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital.

As a matter of fact, the very same day that I asked the question in the House, which was last Tuesday, that evening the board of Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital decided to eliminate 38 surgical beds at the hospital and lay off 12 permanent staff members on 1 June, which they say will mean longer waits for surgery and could mean a backup of patients in the emergency ward. About 70 staff members will be affected by reassignments and layoffs, and to quote one nurse at the hospital, "People are losing their jobs and wards are being ripped apart."

Does the minister concur with this type of action and could she tell me why this would be necessary?

Hon Mrs Caplan: As I have told the member before in this House in answer to this question, the ministry is working very closely with the hospital—in fact, with both hospitals in the Kitchener-Waterloo area. A ministry consultant is reviewing the financial situation at the hospital and we expect to report by the end of May.

Mr Eves: The ministry has been aware of the problems since at least January of this year, and to quote the past chairman of the hospital: "This community is growing by leaps and bounds. It will only get worse next year. The Ministry of Health does not like to hear this type of thing, but it's a fact."

It seems to me that we went through this entire process with Cambridge Memorial Hospital in the same area of the province in 1988. In response to those problems in 1988, I would like again, as I did last Tuesday, to remind the minister of her quote with respect to the whole conjoint committee, and I quote the minister directly, "We will undertake upon the ministry to get you funding and get you answers on programs immediately."

How can it be that, if the minister has known about this problem at this particular hospital since at least January, the minister is now saying that she hopes to have some sort of answer in place by the end of May? How can this be when the minister solved all these problems back in 1988? Why are we going through it again in the same region of the province?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I am delighted that the member opposite has raised Cambridge Memorial Hospital. As the members know, some time ago we had members hooting and hollering, ranting and raving, and in fact the reality is Cambridge Memorial Hospital has undergone significant change. It has responded appropriately to the community and is working co-operatively with the ministry as an example of a well-run and innovative hospital in this province.

One of the things that we are trying to do is ensure that hospitals work together, sharing innovative approaches, focusing on the services that people will need as the province's population changes, as technologies allow us to do things in alternative ways.

I can assure the member opposite that we will ensure that essential services are maintained and that we work co-operatively with both hospitals in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, and I want him to know that as we receive the report of the consultant who was actively involved in reviewing this situation, we will ensure that the people of Kitchener-Waterloo receive the services that they require.

Mr Eves: I do not know how we can be going through this almost identical problem two years later in exactly the same region of the province. I want to refer the minister to a comment or two made by the current chairman of the hospital:

"The hospital can only serve patients if it is provided with the money from the Ministry of Health. The hard task is yet another example of the ministry's unfair expectations of hospitals. I feel that the Ministry of Health is to some degree abrogating its responsibility to the people of Ontario by forcing hospitals to make service decisions. We are not the only board struggling with decisions that should more properly be made by a central government."

Does the minister not agree with the statements made by that hospital chairman? How is it that the minister is not assuming the responsibility and making the decisions that she should make? If she wants hospitals to cut services, then it is up to her tell hospitals what services—

1450

The Speaker: The member has already placed two supplementaries.

Hon Mrs Caplan: Surely the member opposite is not advocating a government-run system. One of the strengths of our system is the volunteer hospital board chairmen, who take their responsibilities very, very seriously. The role of the ministry is to work closely with the hospitals to assist them, particularly during this time of transitional funding where we are committed, as part of our equity funding formula, to ensure that hospitals are fairly and appropriately funded.

From time to time each year, as they draft their budgets, there will of course be issues which have to be resolved and worked out, and we pledge ourselves to working co-operatively with the hospitals, focusing on the services that people need. I can tell the member that while it is not perfect yet, we really are making progress.

TRUCKING INDUSTRY

Mr Pouliot: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. The minister will recall that, during the discussions and negotiations that led to his government's decision to deregulate the trucking industry, he was warned by the opposition that if deregulation was allowed to take place in Ontario, people would lose their jobs and the industry would be decimated. In the past 12 months, 5,000 employees in the trucking industry have lost their jobs and, unless immediate steps are taken to level the playing field, another 12,000 will lose their jobs in the year ahead. What specific steps is his ministry taking to help trucking companies that are on the brink of bankruptcy?

Hon Mr Wrye: I would have thought that the honourable member would have perhaps acknowledged in his question the action taken by my colleague the Treasurer in last week's budget, which we believe will take significant action in terms of correcting any problems which exist. I think that the actions by the Treasurer were appropriate in the circumstances, an important signal that the government is concerned about the pressures that the trucking industry is facing for a number of reasons, not just the reasons stated by the honourable member.

But I can say to the honourable member that within the government we are continuing to review this problem very carefully with the Ontario Trucking Association and leaders of various trucking firms in Ontario to ensure that the industry, which is such an important one, with almost 250,000 jobs, remains a very viable industry in this province.

Mr Pouliot: Because of the minister's decision to deregulate, and also because of the desperate need to compete in the marketplace, safety is indeed being compromised. For instance, of 26,000 trucks inspected in 1988, fully 22%, almost a quarter, had safety defects so serious that they warranted their removal off the road. In the riding of the Premier and in Brampton, 28% of the trucks inspected were unsafe; they had to be hauled off the road. What is the minister doing to ensure the safety of motorists in Ontario?

Hon Mr Wrye: I am surprised that the honourable member again would not have acknowledged the fact that Ontario has moved very quickly to implement the National Safety Code and that indeed our enforcement of that code has been very rigorous. We have had a number of spot and surprise inspections, the most recent of which was a couple of months ago. We have, of course, the ongoing inspection stations and we have increased the amount of time that those stations are open.

But we are concerned, first of all, about any violations of hours of work laws, and we are very pleased to see that the violations which showed up in March were in the 3% range. In terms of the inspections of the equipment itself, the inspections at the inspection stations are facility audits, which are now getting geared up and getting under way. We believe they will bring down the numbers that the honourable member quoted, which are numbers that do concern me and do concern the government, that they will bring these down very, very significantly and we will have very safe vehicles on the road.

CULTURAL FINANCING

Mr Wiseman: I have a question of the Minister of Culture and Communications. Does the minister believe that the endowment promised yesterday to Harbourfront by her government will enable it to continue to deliver the popular and valuable cultural programs that it does?

Hon Ms Hart: I must say I am happy to be asked about this initiative, because I can give my heartfelt congratulations to the member for Kitchener-Wilmot, the minister of various things, including Housing, and also to Duncan Allan, the official who put together this arrangement when many others could not, tried and failed. This arrangement is going to make sure that the cultural programming at Harbourfront has a very secure future; \$50 million as an endowment from a public source is unprecedented.

Mr Brandt: That wasn't the question.

Hon Mr Elston: That was the answer.

Mr Brandt: It wasn't an answer.

Mr Ferraro: It's a hell of an answer.

Mr Brandt: It had to do with funding for the arts. I'll help you.

The Speaker: Would the member for Lanark-Renfrew allow the member for Sarnia to ask a supplementary?

Mr Wiseman: The chairman of the board for Harbourfront has said that if these valuable facilities are to survive, they will need much more than the endowment that the minister promised them yesterday. If the endowment is too small, as we believe it to be, will the minister guarantee us today, and the people at Harbourfront, that her government will come forward with the necessary money to make sure that these facilities continue to exist?

Hon Ms Hart: For one thing, I can tell members that the interest on the endowment money will raise, if conservatively invested, in the neighbourhood of \$6 million to \$7 million a year. That, as members will appreciate, is about half the income that Harbourfront currently has. Harbourfront does raise income through business sponsorships and also through the gate, because a number of the activities at Harbourfront are charged for and the public pays admission. I am confident, having had my officials involved in this throughout, that Harbourfront and its cultural programming will be secure in the future.

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr M. C. Ray: I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. It concerns job creation and capital investment in the city of Windsor by the Ford Motor Co. The president of Ford USA, Philip Benton, recently was quoted in the *Globe and Mail* as indicating that Ford was considering investment in an aluminum casting plant in Windsor and a van plant in the Oakville area. In view of the recently announced closure of the Windsor engine plant 2, in our private meetings I have requested that the minister impress upon Ford Canada its special obligations to the city of Windsor and particularly to the Ford employees in Windsor. Could the minister please inform the House on the status of these proposed investments?

Hon Mr Kwinter: I want to commend the member for Windsor-Walkerville and also my colleague the member for Windsor-Sandwich for their efforts and their concern about what is happening in Windsor.

They should know that the automotive industry is going through some very dramatic rationalization and that we are really into a global automotive industry. I was heartened by the fact that Philip Benton, at a speech that he gave to the Canadian Club on 18 April, indicated that serious consideration was being given to establishing that particular facility, a van plant in Oakville and an aluminum casting plant in Windsor.

We have been working for some time with Ford Motor Co, trying to ascertain what its North American requirements are going to be. We have been co-operating with them in a way that they can make a pitch, so to speak, to their board to try to attract that facility into Ontario. I think all members should know that we are competing with St Louis, Missouri, and that decision has not yet been taken. But I want to assure members that we as a government and my ministry are working with Ford Motor Co offering them whatever we can to induce them to bring that facility to Ontario. Not only would it provide jobs in Windsor, but the spinoffs of that whole thing would ripple through the whole automotive parts industry in Ontario.

1500

Mr M. C. Ray: Could the minister, in addition to the Ford situation, in view of the several plant closures and bankruptcies in the Windsor area in recent months, advise us what other efforts he and his ministry are undertaking and he is undertaking in the Windsor area to assist our local economy?

Hon Mr Kwinter: If the member would bear with me, I would like to just tell him some of the things that have been happening in the Windsor area. The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology office, with the Ontario Development Corp, has authorized \$7.9 million in loans for 31 clients, resulting in \$13.6 million in investments and creating 223 jobs during 1989. Windsor-Essex received 53% of the total loans made in the southwestern Ontario region in 1989. MITT has financially supported Windsor in its efforts to produce a strategic plan.

Windsor-Essex has been promoted as an attractive environment for licensing agreements, investments and plant locations, and we have had over 90 visits by Pacific Rim visitors. A self-help centre has been located in the Windsor office, and in this past year it has offered guidance in financing, marketing and general business assistance to 785 perspective entrepreneurs.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr Morin-Strom: I have a question for the Minister of Labour with respect to workers' compensation services for injured workers in Sault Ste Marie. This issue was raised with the minister several weeks ago by myself, and he has received other communications, from the member for Algoma and the member for Sudbury East, as well.

The minister's response indicates his support for the Workers' Compensation Board plan to transfer the adjudication of Sault Ste Marie claims from Sudbury to a new integrated service unit, or ISU, in Thunder Bay. At the same time, the minister's response indicates that the regional ISU in Thunder Bay, when fully implemented, will include a staff complement increase to accommodate the increased workload.

Will the minister explain to us why he is not putting that staffing into Sault Ste Marie so that the injured workers in Sault Ste Marie and Algoma district can be handled in their own area, rather than putting that staff complement in Thunder Bay?

Hon Mr Phillips: I am sure the member realizes that these are decisions made by the Workers' Compensation Board after consultation with its board. I do not make that decision; the board does. I might say, though, that the board has been very active in implementing a program to move services out of Metro Toronto and ensure that services are as close as they can bring them to the individuals who are affected.

In that particular case, the Workers' Compensation Board management brought those recommendations to its board, reviewed them with its board and went over the service levels that it felt would best meet the needs of the individuals across Ontario. In terms of support or non-support for the recommendations, I have reviewed those proposals with the Workers' Compensation Board. I am certain they have reviewed them very thoroughly with their board and that they are convinced, and I think with good reason, that they will represent improved service for individuals across Ontario.

I want to make it clear that that is a decision made by the board after a good deal of consultation and a good deal of research. They are convinced it will represent an improved and enhanced service for the workers across the province.

Mr Morin-Strom: The minister talks about moving services closer to the constituents. I have a map here of the province of Ontario, and perhaps the minister should talk to the Minister of Transportation. We have got one side of the map, the map of southern Ontario, and Sault Ste Marie is not even on the corner of the map, and it is a considerable distance on this side to Toronto. But on the other side of the map, it would appear that Sault Ste Marie and Thunder Bay are relatively close together. Interestingly enough, if one looks at the mileage chart, it shows Sault Ste Marie to Toronto is some 690 kilometres, while Sault Ste Marie to Thunder Bay is 690 kilometres, exactly the same distance. How on earth does moving a regional service to Thunder Bay improve the services to workers in Sault Ste Marie when they could just as well be served out of Toronto?

Hon Mr Phillips: I am talking, of course, about decentralization into major regional centres. I have been told

that, in terms of service for the Sault Ste Marie workers, they can receive virtually all of their services in Sault Ste Marie. The units that have been moved from Sudbury to Thunder Bay are service units that will provide services that can be handled over the phone in terms of the day-to-day requirements for individuals in Sault Ste Marie. I am told that those services will continue to be provided in Sault Ste Marie by the local people in Sault Ste Marie. There will be requirements to provide phone service in certain instances, and that can be done by contacting the Thunder Bay office.

CHICKEN INDUSTRY

Mr Villeneuve: To the Minister of Agriculture and Food: I am sure the minister is aware that the chicken industry shortages are giving national supply management a black eye. Ontario's demand for chicken exceeds production. Processors, retailers and restaurants have run short and run out of product in certain instances. The Canadian Chicken Marketing Agency has rejected Ontario's request for more production this coming summer. If their recently initiated appeal falls on deaf ears, what does the minister intend to do to meet the supply that is required by the consumers and also meet the requirements of the poultry industry? They can produce here.

Hon Mr Ramsay: I am glad to respond to this question because it is a problem that I am very concerned about also. As the member has noted, I have personally appealed this decision to the national marketing agency. I would hope for a favourable outcome. I would just say to the member that if we do not get a favourable outcome, I am prepared to do whatever we have to do to make sure there is sufficient supply for Ontario consumers this summer.

Mr Villeneuve: I am glad the minister is prepared to do what he feels he has to do. Kentucky Fried Chicken, Swiss Chalet and a number of others are having to import chicken from outside of Ontario, and even from outside of Canada. Is the minister prepared to pull out of the national organization and have Ontario run on its own?

Hon Mr Ramsay: The danger of pulling out, as I am sure the member across the way knows, is that we lose our protection under article 11 of the GATT, in that at least 80% of the commodity has to be supply-managed. British Columbia was able to do that because it was a much less significant part of the market than Ontario is. Unfortunately, that option is not there, or basically we would kill the whole system in the country. I am prepared to look at whatever options are available to me to make sure there is sufficient supply this summer, so we do not have to have importation of American chicken.

WATER PIPELINE

Mr Epp: The Minister of Municipal Affairs announced earlier today the establishment of a water and sewer corporation in Ontario. He is very aware of the water shortages which we in the Waterloo region experience and have experienced for a number of years. Would he please indicate to me and the regional officials how we might improve our chances of obtaining funds through this new corporation for a pipeline from Lake Huron to the Waterloo region?

Hon Mr Sweeney: The situation that exists in Kitchener-Waterloo and in a number of other places in the province was precisely the reason why this government decided to proceed with the new initiative. We recognized that neither the municipality—the region of Waterloo—nor the provincial

government has the unlimited resources that are necessary, first of all, to rehabilitate the existing service so that it meets the health needs of the local population and the environmental needs of the local population, but also Kitchener-Waterloo and Waterloo region are one of those areas of the province that are growing fairly rapidly, and they did not have the financial resources to provide for that growth as well. The whole purpose of the new water commission is to assist and to be able to attract additional funds to be able to do that very thing. As soon as the commission is in place, I would be quite happy to direct its attention to the home ridings of both my honourable colleague and myself.

1510

Mr Epp: Is the minister prepared and is the government prepared to attach some urgency to the request, which I am sure will be forthcoming shortly from the region, with regard to a pipeline? Second, is the minister prepared to indicate what kind of percentage of support the government will give to the region once that request comes forth?

Hon Mr Sweeney: If it is determined that a pipeline is the logical solution to the needs of Waterloo region and to other areas. As the honourable member will recognize, the city of London is looking for additional water supplies, as well as the cities of Brantford and Guelph, which are in the general area, and the area of Halton is looking for additional water supplies.

It seems to make sense to us that, in trying to deal with each of those individual needs, a single pipeline could perhaps be designed in such a way as to meet all of their needs. That would provide for a much more efficient and much more effective cost-sharing of the water that would actually be produced, and on the basis of that, we would have to determine what share the local municipality would pay.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mrs Grier: My question is to the Minister of the Environment. It concerns a statement in last week's budget speech when the Treasurer talked about Ontario's approach to waste abatement and said there would be development of new incineration facilities. This is a switch, and I wonder if the Minister of the Environment could tell us—this statement could perhaps represent one of two alternatives. Does it mean that the government has acknowledged the failure of the Minister of the Environment's policies on waste reduction, or is this yet another environmental policy area that the Treasurer is taking over from the Minister of the Environment? Which is it?

Hon Mr Bradley: Actually, the Treasurer was accusing me of taking over the Treasury with \$649 million in the new budget for the field of the environment.

Mr B. Rae: Out of \$45 billion?

Hon Mr Bradley: It is far more than ever would have happened under a New Democratic government.

Mr B. Rae: Jim, there is only one way to find out.

Hon Mr Bradley: That is true. We do not want to find that out.

I think if the member looks very carefully, she will see that the amount of money being spent on the recycling, reduction and reuse option this year is in fact some \$55 million. Remember the old days when we came into power, and they were spending \$750,000 on the blue box program? Now on this 3R initiative we are spending some \$55 million.

It has always been in the province of Ontario that if anyone wants to bring forward any waste disposal proposal to the Ministry of the Environment, it is scrutinized by the ministry and by other ministries as it goes through the environmental approval, and ultimately the Environmental Assessment Board makes its decision, as it did in Peel. They can either reject it, accept it or accept it with conditions, and that is the way it has always been.

Mrs Grier: I did not hear an answer to my question, but I have to infer that this move by the Treasurer represents a new policy.

I would like to remind the Minister of the Environment of a speech he gave in October 1989 when he said: "Some have come to me and asked that energy from waste incineration be considered as a valid part of the 50% diversion from landfill. Energy from waste can defeat the whole purpose of waste reduction and recycling, that purpose being the conservation and reuse of our precious renewable and finite natural resources."

In the face of that statement, how can the minister in any way justify the reintroduction of incineration by the Treasurer as an alternative to waste reduction?

Hon Mr Bradley: It is late in the question period and this may be the reason, but the member has completely misinterpreted this, I am sure not naively, but she has perhaps seen something that is not really there.

What I have said consistently and what this government says consistently is that incineration or landfill cannot be counted as part of the diversion, 25% by 1992, 50% by the year 2000. It cannot be counted as part of that. I know some of the member's municipal friends do not agree with that and believe it should be counted as part of the diversion, but in fact it is not counted as part of the diversion.

Nothing has changed, except the fact that the government of Ontario is spending so much more money on the other three Rs in Ontario. Nothing has changed. They must meet their requirements for diversion from ways other than disposal, and both incineration and landfill are methods of disposal, not methods of diversion.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT CORP

Mr Jackson: I have a question for the Minister of Revenue. In the Treasurer's budget he indicated the establishment of the new Property Assessment Corp. Last week the minister tabled a bill, Bill 156, which, if I paraphrase from it, indicates that 50% of the members of the corporation shall be representatives of the municipal sector, being either members of council or senior appointed officials of a municipality.

School boards are not mentioned and yet they are very much dependent upon assessment in Ontario. Because of this government's fiscal policies towards education, we have seen the contribution drop to 40%, which means 60% is dependent on local assessment for school boards to survive. In fact, the city of Toronto's \$1.8-billion budget is entirely financed by local assessment.

Given the importance of property assessment to school boards, can the minister assure this House that school boards, trustees, will be represented on his new Property Assessment Corp board?

Hon Mr Mancini: I am having a difficult time trying to follow the logic of the honourable member's question. He knows that property assessment, up until 1970, had been the sole responsibility of the municipalities across the province. Because things were in a state of disarray in that particular

sector of public policy, the government of Ontario of the day decided that it should take over the responsibility and we, over the past 20 years, have put that system right. We are now evolving to the next step where we are bringing back the municipalities as full partners in the assessment system.

I am not quite sure what the honourable member is after in his question, but it is the municipalities that will share with us the responsibility of providing appropriate rolls so that appropriate tax rates for the municipalities and school boards and others can be established.

Mr Jackson: Quite frankly, what we all ask for is a simple, straight answer. My question to the minister was whether his board would allow the participation of school trustees and school boards.

I am surprised at the minister's ignorance of his own ministry's involvement in the issue of school board assessment as it relates to commercial-industrial assessment. His own government brought in a bill recently, Bill 64, which involves the shifting of commercial-industrial assessment from public boards to separate school boards in this province.

My question is still valid in so far as public, Catholic and francophone trustees have all asked the government whether it will allow representation on this new assessment corporation board. It is a relevant question because those groups are concerned about having a voice and participation on this new board. Will the minister allow them to serve on the board or not? It is a simple question.

Hon Mr Mancini: I do not think the honourable member is really making any sense, to be honest. If we followed the honourable member's logic, we would then have business leaders who have to pay business taxes on the board. We would then have ratepayers who pay taxes through their property taxes on the board. We would then have to have people from the agricultural community. We would have to have people representing the multi-dwelling industry on the board. We would have a board with 200 people.

We want to share this responsibility with the municipalities. They are the major partners. This is the next step in the evolution of this process, which started way back in 1970, and we are going to put assessment back on the proper basis where it should be, a shared responsibility with the government of Ontario and the municipalities.

1520

WOMEN'S ISSUES

Mrs O'Neill: My question is to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues. There has been some comment made in this assembly and beyond it that the budget of Ontario for 1990-91 does not speak of women or women's issues. Would the minister make some comments on this statement, please?

Hon Mrs Wilson: The budget benefits women in a number of significant ways. First of all, income tax cuts for lower-income families with children will benefit women. A significant number of these lower-income families are headed by single women.

The reform of our long-term care system will benefit women. Women have traditionally been and continue to be the informal care givers for elderly who live at home. Visiting homemakers and many of the volunteers who deliver programs such as Meals on Wheels are women, and because women live

longer than men, women are the biggest portion of consumers of the long-term care system.

The budget also makes available funds to increase salaries for workers in community-based social service agencies. Many of those workers are women. And, of course, women will benefit from the continued sound management of Ontario's economy and social service programs.

In these ways our new budget delivered by our Treasurer last week will benefit the women of Ontario in significant ways.

Mrs O'Neill: The second part of my question springs from the first, but it is a little more specific. Child care facilities in this province are very important to families, and many families in this province are headed by women.

In my riding of Ottawa-Rideau I receive much correspondence on how and in what ways our government can enhance child care. I would like the minister to update my constituents on what our government is doing in the area of child care and its enhancement.

Hon Mrs Wilson: The member for Ottawa-Rideau is quite correct in signifying the importance of child care for women in Ontario today, particularly when we know that in the next few years women will make up fully 50% of Ontario's labour force.

Due to Ottawa's limitation on the Canada assistance plan cost-sharing program, contributions from the federal government will remain at last year's level of \$139 million. My government, however, does not believe that this is the way to address child care issues, and consequently Ontario's share of child care costs will increase to \$257 million this year, which is up some 27% from what we spent just last year. This shows the Ontario government's commitment to child care for women in the province.

ASSISTANCE TO TOBACCO FARMERS

Mr Wildman: I have a question for the Treasurer in regard to the only major tax increase announced in the budget, the tax on cigarettes, and how that affects tobacco farmers in the province.

In view of the fact that the Treasurer has raised taxes on cigarettes and there are already, as of this month, approximately 550 tobacco farmers on the waiting list for the tobacco assistance program, the Redux program, can the Treasurer indicate how much of the additional revenue that the provincial government is going to receive from the cigarette tax increase will go to the Redux program to assist more tobacco farmers to adjust to the decline in the market?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am sure the honourable member knows that it is not a case of earmarking the dollars from a tax to a program. The money from the tax goes into the consolidated revenue fund, and this year it is going to be in excess of \$860 million, a lot of money.

The tobacco reduction program is one that is financed in conjunction with the government of Canada. We have had a program that has gone on for a number of years, and I am trying to think of the details of it. The member might ask the Minister of Agriculture and Food if he wants further detail. But it has been reasonably successful.

I represent an area containing a number of tobacco farmers, and although they have not asked that question specifically, they have expressed their views on the increase in the tax to me.

Mr Wildman: The minister might be interested to know that so far, 573 farmers have been assisted. Approximately the same amount are still waiting for assistance. There needs to be

more funding. I am sure those farmers will be happy to find out from the Treasurer that this government does not intend to increase the funding for the Redux program.

What specific amounts of this year's budget will be allocated to increase the funding above the \$13 million currently allocated by the federal and provincial governments?

Hon R. F. Nixon: I am not aware of any additional funds above the \$13 million, but the tobacco board, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the officials from the government of Canada meet from time to time so that the progress of the program is a reasonable one.

I think the honourable member would be aware and would be glad to hear that the planting is either just about to begin or has already begun in some parts of the province and that there is a good deal of confidence that the amount grown is going to be maintained over the next three years.

PETITIONS

DIAPERS

Mrs Grier: I have a petition which has been collected and signed by representatives of the Windsor and District Clean Water Alliance. I think there are well over 1,000 signatures, and it relates to the issue of disposable diapers.

It points out the problems caused in landfills from a health point of view and also in occupation of the capacity of landfills by such disposable diapers and requests the government of Ontario to require Ontario hospitals to stop using disposable diapers on maternity wards within one year and return to the use of cloth diapers.

CLOSING OF CAMPGROUNDS

Mr Villeneuve: I too have a petition. It is supplementary to a petition that was presented to this Legislature in April. It has to do with the closing of parks in eastern Ontario and is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

One of the petitions, signed by 27 people, says: "We, the people, would like to see Charlottenburgh Park kept open to campers and picnickers."

The other petition, signed by an additional 31 people—this is supplementary to a petition with some 6,700 names that was presented last month—wants to keep open all five parks in eastern Ontario scheduled to be closed.

Mr R. F. Johnston moved the adjournment of the House.

1558

The House divided on Mr R. F. Johnston's motion, which was negated on the following vote:

Ayes 13; nays 58.

Mrs O'Neill moved that the House proceed to orders of the day.

1630

The House divided on Mrs O'Neill's motion, which was agreed to on the following vote:

Ayes 44; nays 26.

Mr Runciman: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: On at least two occasions this afternoon the member for Parry Sound was on his feet wishing to table very important petitions with over 900 signatures dealing with hospital beds. He was not afforded that opportunity. At this point, this whole exercise is an

affront to democracy. I want to request unanimous consent for reversion to petitions.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. There has been a request that the House revert to petitions. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon members: No.

The Speaker: There is not unanimous consent.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on government notice of motion number 30 on time allocation in relation to Bill 68, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance.

Mr Kormos: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The Liberals refuse to debate, the Liberals refuse to hear petitions. What next? Do they simply lock the doors and throw the opposition—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Welland-Thorold asked the Chair to listen to a point of order. I listened. It was not a point of order; it was a point of view.

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I wonder if we could have unanimous consent to revert to reports by committees since we have a report from one of the standing committees.

The Speaker: There has been a request for unanimous consent to revert to committee reports.

Mr Kerrio: No, there is an order on the floor.

The Speaker: No, there is not unanimous consent.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I called for orders of the day. I heard the table call the order. I will now recognize the member for Leeds-Grenville.

Mr D. S. Cooke: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I have been waiting for the appropriate time to raise this point of order, in view of what occurred last week in the Legislature and the week before, where the government in one week presented a motion that would have had the Legislature sitting until midnight from the date that the motion was presented until 2 May, and then last Thursday's motion with no warning to yourself as the Speaker of the Legislature or the staff around here, and that seems to be now the approach that the government is going to take. They will do whatever they have to do, whatever they want to do, whatever hours they so decide as the majority.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Mr Speaker, during the night, when we sat all night last Thursday night, points of order were raised with you with regard to staffing for simultaneous translation and interjectionists, and I would add to that the concern about whether we have adequate staffing to properly staff the security personnel around this place if this is obviously going to become a regular procedure.

Mr Speaker, we have been waiting. We thought perhaps you might have reported to us earlier today on what your response to this is going to be for the next time this happens—and it could be any time; it could be later this week, it could be tonight, it could be tomorrow—what arrangements are going to be made and whether it is the plan of the Speaker to present to the Board of Internal Economy or to the parties requests for additional funding and personnel so that this place can be properly staffed, with the new hours that the Liberal majority intends to impose on the Legislature.

I think it is an appropriate point and it should not be dealt with as it was last week, where we got into the position where staff left and we were not properly staffed around this place. I know there are a number of members who have concerns about this and I think it would be an appropriate time for you to give a full response, as the chief officer of this place, as to what your plans are when this happens the next time. As I say, it could happen any time with this majority government that does not give a damn about the opposition parties or democracy in this place.

1640

Mr R. F. Johnston: On the same point of order, Mr Speaker: If I might just be specific about some of the elements of the standing orders that relate to these matters, the first thing would be to have a report on what is the notion of full Hansard. In the necessity of being able to continue on that evening, we continued without the interjectionists of Hansard being able to function. As a result of that, I would argue that we did not have what we would consider full Hansard in terms of our traditions in this place. Other houses have various other forms of making sure that the full intent of a speaker is understood. We have always thought that the position of these interjectionist Hansard people would be appropriate.

One of the other matters I raised, and it might have seemed not to be important to members, was the whole process for the appointment of a replacement for the Sergeant at Arms when he was absent. Although we were informed that in fact some kind of arrangement had been made for an attendant to take the place of the Sergeant at Arms, the importance, in my view, of sections 137, 138 and 139 being fulfilled in our standing orders was one which was not reported back to this House by the Speaker in terms of how that was going to be dealt with when the Sergeant at Arms could not be here at that time, how the guarantees of the normal security of this place and of the persons in this place should be accomplished and handled.

I think you rightfully brought up as well, on the question of translation, the report of the standing committee to this House, which we adopted. It listed the number of translators we would have available to us. Very clearly, as I think you were trying to imply with your remarks, those numbers were not sufficient to provide all-night-long translation at that point. There must be some kind of recognition of the fact that, if we are going to have that kind of tactic foisted on you as the person who administers the proceedings of this place, we are going to have to make sure we have adequate staff who can be called in.

Luckily, since it was in the morning that the problem was noted, we were able to find somebody after a brief recess, but I would argue that it is the kind of thing for which the House should be adjourned if we do not have it available and that it is something which, if you do not get the proper support from the Board of Internal Economy on this matter, you should consider in the future, sir.

The Speaker: I have listened very carefully to the members, I am fully aware of what was said the other night, all night, and I have taken it upon myself as the—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I listened carefully to the points of order at that time regarding a simultaneous translation, regarding the full Hansard service and regarding the presence of the Sergeant at Arms. I am not here to argue any of those particular cases or points. I would like to inform the members that immediately following that session, because of what I found out concerning the committee report that was approved by this House, I took it upon myself to instruct individuals to make certain that I would be informed and make certain that these people would be in place for similar circumstances.

Interjection.

The Speaker: The member for Algoma, on what?

Mr Wildman: I would like to move adjournment of the House.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I cannot accept that on a point of order. If you have the floor legitimately, you may.

Mr D. S. Cooke: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member for Algoma did not rise on a point of order. The member for Algoma rose and you recognized him. There is a motion to adjourn the House.

The Speaker: I appreciate the member for Windsor-Riverside, who does not agree with my interpretation of the rules. However, I stand by my rule that it is out of order and I recognize the member for Leeds-Grenville.

Mr Runciman: It is a pleasure to participate in this very important debate affecting all Ontarians. I want to say that it is unfortunate that we have the atmosphere in this House which we have seen here today, but its origins really stem from the government's decision to introduce this kind of legislation and limit debate through committee of the whole House and on third reading.

If we go back to the history of this and take a look at the fact that the minister and the government House leader, in my view, overreacted in what can be construed as an arrogant way in terms of cutting off debate based on comments made during the second day of debate on this legislation, I do not think that anyone in the public who seriously considers these kinds of matters would consider that to be an appropriate way to deal with such important legislation.

I want once again to take this opportunity to commend the member for Welland-Thorold who preceded me in commenting on this legislation. He did an outstanding job.

Mr Kormos: Thank you very much, Mr Runciman. I appreciate that. Any time.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr B. Runciman: He and I worked together on the committee, and I want to say that there were very few issues respecting this particular piece of legislation that we disagreed on. Obviously the member believes in government-run auto insurance. We do not agree with that.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Runciman: We think that indeed that is where this Liberal government is heading. In that sense, he and some of his colleagues differ as well. We know the member for Nickel Belt sat on the committee on one occasion and is a very strong advocate of pure no-fault with a government-run program, comparable to, I gather, the Quebec situation. So there are some differences of opinion within the NDP caucus.

I want to say there are no differences of opinion within the Progressive Conservative caucus with respect to believing in the free enterprise system, in believing that this sort of thing best belongs within the purview of the private sector. Also, we have a series of—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Speaker is trying to listen to the member who has the floor. There is only one; it is the member for Leeds-Grenville, please.

Mr Runciman: I appreciate the break provided by the Liberal members creating a lot of noise and not listening to anyone making a contribution with respect to this issue. That is typical of the way they have dealt with this issue from day one, going back to the Bill 2 hearings in 1987.

I wanted to say that I have long admired the members of the NDP with respect to their ability to stay on their feet and talk at length. Sitting as a backbencher in the government, back in 1981-84, I used to be amazed at the ability of members of that party to go at length and make a useful contribution to the debate. I have often thought that perhaps socialists were born with larger bladders than the rest of us. I am not sure if there is any truth to that or not. In any event, they seem to have that ability.

I must say that in the number of years that I have been on this side of the House now, you do learn, if that is the proper word, to be able to participate at length with respect to some of these debates.

I also want to thank the member for Durham-York for ensuring that I have the appropriate refreshment for the evening. I much appreciate it.

I also want to say, with respect to the member for Welland-Thorold, that he was wearing his boots through the entire event. I personally do not own a pair of cowboy boots, but I put on desert boots in the hope that they will be able to sustain me through the length of this, whatever length it might be. At this point, we are uncertain.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Runciman: We certainly want to make sure that all the views of our party are put on the record and that all the views of the innumerable witnesses who appeared before the committee studying Bill 68 are heard as well during this next number of hours because unfortunately, as a result of the government's decision to cut off debate and restrict debate, we are not going to have the opportunity to deal with those at length in committee of the whole as we would have under a normal process.

I want to say that my contribution in many respects is going to be different from that given by the member for Welland-Thorold.

1650

Mr Ferraro: You are not giving out your phone numbers.

Mr Runciman: Who knows. I may be giving out phone numbers, but I do not intend to talk about my dog.

Mr Kormos: You don't have a dog.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Runciman: As a matter of fact, I do have a dog, but I am not going to talk about my dog. I am not going to talk about operations that my dog might have had.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Members from all three parties have a hard time respecting the standing orders right now, which call for only one member at a time. No exceptions. The member for Leeds-Grenville.

Mr Runciman: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was pointing out to the member for Welland-Thorold that I do indeed have a dog and I do not intend any slight to my dog by not dealing in detail with some of the problems he may or may not have experienced during the course of his four years on this earth.

Interjections.

Mr Runciman: As a matter of fact, I have a four-year-old dog by the name of Gabriel, who was deposited on my doorstep by my oldest daughter a number of years ago, and since that time we have been stuck with him.

An hon member: What kind of dog is he?

Mr Runciman: A cocker spaniel, as a matter of fact. The Liberal chairman of the committee is quite interested in this, so we certainly want to make sure he is fully informed. But as I said, I do not want to talk in detail about my dog, even though he is a fine dog, a fine watchdog, as a matter of fact.

Mr D. R. Cooke: What's his name?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. There are many private conversations and there are many interjections, which make it difficult for me to hear the member for Leeds-Grenville.

Mr Runciman: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I very much appreciate your concern.

Instead, what I hope to do during the next period of time is to deal with some specifics, to deal with the history with respect to automobile insurance and the Liberal government over the past four and a half years.

It is a sad history indeed. It is one of mismanagement, it is one of a seat-of-the-pants operation, running from crisis to crisis and really never having any focus, any real goal with respect to where they wanted to go with automobile insurance in this province. Their efforts have been directed towards short-term political gain and certainly have not been in the best interests of Ontario consumers or Ontario taxpayers.

Mr Eves: Or dogs.

Mr Runciman: Or dogs, that is right. Put that in there.

During the course of the next period of time, I also want to talk about the committee process. I will spend a bit of time during the history of this exercise talking about the justice committee hearings on Bill 2, which established the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. I also want to talk about the committee process with respect to Bill 68, the no-fault auto legislation. Of course, that is very much relevant to the legislation before us today when we are talking about time allocation.

All of the witnesses who appeared before us, overwhelmingly in opposition to this legislation, have to have an opportunity through this forum to have their views and concerns put on the record once again, because as I have said on a number of

occasions, the government has not listened, has been unwilling to listen, and in effect we are going to try once more to get that message through to it. I think we have an obligation to those many people across the province who have legitimate and serious concerns.

During committee of the whole, we are also going to be introducing a number of amendments to this legislation. We went through a long debate internally as to whether or not we wanted to introduce amendments to this legislation. As we know, the official opposition is not introducing amendments because they feel so strongly that this legislation is totally inappropriate for the needs of Ontarians that they do not think they should not be dignifying it by introducing amendments.

I want to say that we had that same kind of struggle within our own party. We felt, as I said, that there is an obligation, a commitment, a responsibility to all of the groups that appeared before us, the head-injured, all sorts of interested individuals and groups, to have those concerns put on the record through an amendment that may deal with the threshold when we are talking about psychological or head injuries, and deals with a whole host of areas. We feel it is our responsibility as legislators to ensure that those people and organizations have their views heard within the assembly itself.

I will be reviewing those amendments in some detail during this debate, simply because the government has cut off debate through the normal process, and that is committee of the whole. We are not going to have that opportunity, so we have to take opportunities that are afforded us by the Liberal majority government and put those views on the record.

One of the things I also want to talk about during this period is alternatives. I do not want to be standing up here for a number of hours being totally negative about this legislation, although that is easy to do. There are very few things that I could talk positively about in respect to Bill 68, this no-fault insurance.

But I do at the same time want to present what we believe are legitimate and responsible alternatives to what the government is doing with auto insurance in this province. So at some point during the next little while, I will be presenting a number of alternatives for the consideration of the members of the House and the consideration of the members of the public who frequently will say: "Look, you can criticize this thing. You are opposing it as members of the opposition. But do you have any alternatives to offer?"

We have had alternatives which we have discussed in the past, and I am going to elaborate on them, not only our own alternatives, but also the alternatives of other groups and organizations and individuals in the public who have made those alternatives available to the government. They again, like so many others, have been ignored by an arrogant Liberal majority.

I want to talk about time allocation. One of the difficulties of this is the fact that the member for Welland-Thorold and I, because of what has occurred, have to get up and speak at some length to ensure that the concerns and views are heard by the Legislature. I think to a significant degree that is unfair to all members in this assembly, but it is especially unfair to members of the opposition parties, and obviously somewhat unfair to the critics who are responsible for these areas because they have that burden fall upon them.

I guess both the member for Welland-Thorold and I are prepared to shoulder that, but what it does is remove the possibility of other members of my caucus, other members of the NDP caucus, getting up and expressing their views and the views of their constituents. What this Liberal government has

done is shut out those people from being heard and from having their elected representatives have the opportunity to express those concerns and views and suggestions in the Legislative Assembly. They were elected to do that.

The Liberal members, the backbenchers of the government, were elected to do that. They are choosing not to participate in this debate. They are choosing not to participate for a variety of reasons, primarily, I assume, for reasons of party discipline. It may be out of personal ambition, hoping to achieve some sort of appointment in the future if they are retiring or some sort of appointment, whether it is a parliamentary assistantship, a chairmanship of a committee or ultimately getting into the executive council, the cabinet. Whatever the reason, the members of the Liberal Party have chosen not to participate in this debate.

At the same time, that is fair game. If they do not want to and they have their reasons not to, we can live with that. But we cannot accept the fact that this government, this arrogant government, has also shut out all but two members of the opposition from participating and from getting their points of view and the points of view of thousands of people across this province on the record.

Mr Miller: You didn't want to co-operate.

1700

Mr Runciman: I got an interjection that we did not want to co-operate. Mr Speaker, as you know I tend to get a little loud on occasion and I am restraining myself because I have some difficulties with my voice after a period of time. It is an old byproduct of working in the chemical industry for a number of years and shouting over loud machinery and compressors, etc, so that after a period of time my voice tends to get a little weaker. Despite the aggravation that might come across the floor, I am going to try to be quite restrained during this debate and discussion and talk quietly, and hopefully effectively, and get the points of view across.

But the member for Norfolk, a gentleman whom I respect, said that they have cut off the opposition because of obstructionist tactics. That is totally incorrect. If we take a look at what has happened with respect to the government's decision to cut off debate after only two days in committee and bring in time allocation—and it is unheard of in the history of this Parliament, that kind of initiative by a government, bringing it in so quickly—to suggest after only two days of debate that the opposition was being obstructionist is ludicrous. Obviously that member is simply spouting the government line and has no real understanding or awareness or appreciation of what has transpired during the course of this matter.

If the member wants to take a look at the history in respect to the introduction of time allocation, he will find very clearly that this is unheard of in respect of the timing of this allocation bill, the fact that it was brought in so early and really prohibits members of both opposition parties from participating in what is one of the most important debates we have had in this House in some time.

I want to say at this time too that I have already made some comments in respect to the NDP, but I do not want to get overly complimentary because that could be misconstrued. When I was first elected in 1981—some of the folks who were sitting within the ranks of the NDP are still here, but there were a number of others as well, and we used to have the feeling that they were not the kinds of folks you would like to go out and have a beer with, that they were not in some respects the ordinary folks Ed Broadbent likes to talk about. I always had the feeling that they

were buying underwear two or three sizes too small and that they were constantly aggravated.

But I want to say that since the 1987 election and the by-election which brought the member for Welland-Thorold in—perhaps it is being on this side of the House and mixing more with members of that party—this crop of people is the kind of folks you would like to have a beer with. They are doing a very effective job and they are bringing new blood in, like the member for Welland-Thorold, as we are with the member for London North. I think that is providing great inspiration for both parties: new faces, very exciting individuals who are going to ensure that the Liberal government goes down to defeat at the polls during the election expected at some point this year.

The member for Welland-Thorold was complaining—I guess it was after the marathon session last Thursday night—about his back giving out on him. You know you are getting old when your back goes out more often than you do. I have had that feeling myself on a number of occasions, but I am wearing my desert boots. I feel quite comfortable. At some point, if this continues at length, I will probably shed my jacket.

That is another thing I want to commend the member for Welland-Thorold on. He kept his suit on throughout the debate, which was most commendable. But I think if I go on at significant length, hopefully the viewers will appreciate the fact that we are operating under TV lights here and that it does get a little warm on occasion and will not take any offence at the fact that I may have to at some point remove my jacket.

Mr D. W. Smith: As long as you stop there.

Mr Runciman: That is right. I will. I am sure the member opposite is concerned that I will stop at my jacket.

Hon Mr Elston: Do you want the music?

Mr Runciman: Why not?

As I said earlier when we were talking about time allocation and the fact that we are not going to have an opportunity through committee of the whole to get all the views on the record, I want to take this opportunity to start talking about the history of this issue with respect to the Liberal government that came in in June 1985. Obviously the accord—I am not sure; I cannot recall the details of the accord—did not stipulate the institution of government-run auto insurance. In any event, I am not sure that accord served much of a useful purpose for anyone other than the Liberal government. I do not think the people of Ontario were necessarily well served by it, but what it did, really, was ensure, obviously, the election of a majority Liberal government.

Hon Mr Elston: Elie Martel; Ross McClellan.

Mr Runciman: Yes. I am not going to get into that though. At some time when it is more appropriate, I may get into those sorts of things.

I want to talk a bit about the history of Bill 2, which relates to this, because I have been the insurance critic for most of the past four and a half years. I am not sure that gives me any special expertise on this issue, but I have certainly been exposed to it to a significant extent.

The Bill 2 hearings conducted by the standing committee on administration of justice back in 1987 were very revealing with respect to the way the government was going to deal with this issue. They came about as a result, I can only assume, of the Liberal leader's promise in the election. I think it was in early September, just prior to the election date, when he said he had a very specific plan to lower automobile insurance rates. We have all heard this said over and over again in this House

during innumerable debates on auto insurance, that the Premier made a very specific promise that he was going to lower the insurance rates of Ontarians.

Of course we know that has not transpired. We have seen a significant number of increases take place over the past number of years and we have seen millions and millions of taxpayers' dollars wasted as a result of the ineptitude of the Liberal government in dealing with this issue. The fact is—I have said this and I am going to continue to say it—that the ball has to fall into the Premier's court. The buck stops at his desk with respect to the mess we are in in Ontario with automobile insurance. He made a promise without any clear idea of where he was going. He did it for purely political reasons, I believe—short-term political gain. Then, following that promise, he said to his bureaucrats and senior members of the executive council: "You bail me out on this one. You come up with a plan that is going to meet my promise."

Of course they have been unable to do that, but through a series of subterfuges, through a series of efforts to confuse the electorate and the people of this province and divert them from the real issues, playing a game of smoke and mirrors, they have been able to a significant extent to defuse some of the political damage and some of the political fallout that should ensue from the Premier making what some would believe was at the very least a very misleading promise. I have used stronger language on other occasions, and maybe as this debate continues I might be persuaded to use that kind of language again. I hope not, but I think there are more accurate ways of describing what the Premier said and his failure to follow through on his promise than simply describing it as misleading. But I will leave that to the imagination of the members and of anyone who may be viewing these proceedings this evening.

In any event, as a result of the Premier's promise, made I might add during what is probably the most significant study of automobile insurance in the history of North America, being conducted by Mr Justice Coulter Osborne—the Premier made this promise. We had the justice committee assigned the task of looking at Bill 2, which was a massive intervention into the private sector by the Liberal government.

Of course, we know that the Liberal government is not averse to that sort of intervention in the private sector. I have said this before: We have some significant players in the government who were once supporters of the NDP. Perhaps the most significant is the Attorney General, who although he does not like me to say this, at one point not too many years ago was a fund-raiser for the New Democratic Party. I do not think the NDP likes me saying that either, but in any event that is a fact.

1710

We have other members of that party who were prominent members of the NDP. The member for Brantford was a member of the most extreme segment of the NDP, the Waffle group. Mr Speaker, I am sure you have heard of the Waffle group. The member for Brantford was a member of the Waffle—talk about being on the left of the political spectrum—then joined the Liberal Party for opportunistic reasons obviously. Ideology is very unimportant to individuals like that. Then they play a key role in decisions such as this, a massive intervention in the private sector.

I have been ringing the alarm bell since 1987 with respect to the way this government acts and the fact that the insurance industry is looking at this, I am assuming. They say: "Look, we're dealing with a huge Liberal majority government. They're the only game in town. We have to go along with

them." That is in essence what has happened since 1987. It has cost the insurance industry and it has cost taxpayers of this province a significant amount of money. It is going to continue to cost taxpayers money. It is going to continue to shortchange consumers.

In the long run, I think it is going to eliminate the private sector in the insurance field in this province, because if you take a look at a host of things—I will be getting into some of these later, but perhaps the most important one will be the constitutional challenge on Bill 68. If we get through an election and find that this legislation is unconstitutional, this whole insurance situation is going to be thrown into a state of chaos. I have no doubt whatsoever that at that point the Liberal government, if it happens to be the government, will look at the most politically expedient short-term answer for it and again that will be, in my view, nationalization of the industry.

The Treasurer and former Minister of Financial Institutions indicated in this House during question period, in response to a question, that he was not offended at all by the idea of government-run auto insurance. I think that is pretty significant, when we know where the Attorney General is coming from with respect to ideology. Now we have the Treasurer making these comments. I want to just recollect as we are going on here a speech by the Attorney General during the free trade debate. One of his concerns about the free trade legislation was the difficulties it might impose on this provincial government if it decided to nationalize the auto insurance industry.

Clearly we know where the Attorney General is coming from, we know the Treasurer has no difficulties with this and we know the Premier is certainly not above this sort of thing. Of course, we can look at his family background. There are very strong linkages there to the NDP and the old Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. The Premier's father was one of the signatories of the Regina Manifesto.

Mrs E. J. Smith: That is a different accusation.

Mr Runciman: I am only stating the facts, if the member for London South has some difficulty with that. I am trying to indicate the mindset of a number of the very key players in this government, the people who are really the decision-makers. I think it is very significant, very important to the people of this province, and I think that the folks in the insurance industry who are being rather complacent with respect to this legislation at this point in time should be on their guard, very much on their guard.

We went through the Bill 2 hearings and they were in many ways a mirror image of what happened with the standing committee on general government on the no-fault insurance. We had witness after witness testify with respect to concerns about this kind of intervention in the private sector, what the implications were for the industry and what the implications were for consumers and taxpayers. Again, it was ignored. The bulk of that contribution from learned witnesses was essentially ignored.

Perhaps one of the most important elements of that was the discussion on rate classification changes. I am proud to say that our party, of the three parties participating in that exercise, was the only party to oppose the changes brought in with respect to rate classification. Witness after witness foretold the problems rate classification changes were going to create, that they were just not appropriate, that did not recognize the realities of the road and were going to result in significant increases for female drivers and for elderly drivers.

The minister, and it was the same minister, ignored all that testimony completely and went full speed ahead. He required

the insurance industry to make significant changes to comply with those changes. We have heard various estimates of what it cost the industry. Some have said \$20 million, \$30 million or \$40 million. I have heard figures of up to \$100 million that it cost the industry to prepare for the changes required by this minister with respect to rate classification.

What happened when those changes, the rate submissions, were filed with the board? Mr Kruger came to the minister and said, "Here is what it is going to cost." We saw rate increases of 70% and 80% for many people who have been perceived, and rightfully so, as safe drivers in society. They were facing overwhelming increases. The political heat was enormous.

What did the minister do? He threw it all out. Those millions and millions of dollars, the report from the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board which had been operating for some period of months and cost, again, millions and millions of dollars, he threw it all out. Really, that is a sad thing indeed when he wastes that sort of money, not only the private sector's but also taxpayers'. But perhaps the most difficult thing for us to swallow, and I would think for the people of Ontario to swallow, is the fact that the minister knew all of this months and months in advance and failed to act. He ignored the advice, ignored the concerns expressed by many witnesses and did not react until those millions had been spent, until confirmation of the witnesses' testimony was lying before him in a report from the automobile insurance board. Then he had to deal with it. He had to face up to the facts which he was prepared to ignore and write off and not pay any attention to during the Bill 2 hearings.

The minister has an awful lot to answer for. I have not got up in this House and asked for his resignation in the past with respect to that. I like the minister. He is a friend of mine. We were both elected in 1981. It is difficult sometimes, when you are serving in opposition and you are a critic of someone who happens to be a personal friend, to get up and launch into that kind of an attack. We have had some tossing of verbal assaults back and forth on occasion, but I think we have all come out of them still feeling good once we step outside this room.

I have somewhat reluctantly restrained myself, although he may have difficulty believing that, with respect to some of the things I could have been saying and could have been asking for in terms of how he has dealt with this issue. I am going back to Bill 2 and the millions and millions of dollars that were wasted during that exercise. The responsibility for that truly falls on the shoulders of that minister. He may indeed be a very capable member of the executive council, but in that particular case he failed miserably.

He has to live with that. Obviously it has not damaged him with respect to future aspirations within the cabinet of the Liberal government, but I think at the same time that it is something he has to personally live with, with respect to how he performed his assigned task during that very important period of time. I think he failed. I am reluctant to say that, but I think it is clear, based on the record and the facts, that this is what occurred.

There is another element of this that I think is important. We have seen this sort of chicanery and trickery and the sort of effort today where we do away with petitions, for example. It does not serve any useful purpose. If we had gone through the routine business, it may have taken up an additional 10 minutes.

Mrs E. J. Smith: What a laugh.

1720

Mr Runciman: We can hear moans and groans from the government side, but you have to take a look at the history of how the opposition parties have been dealt with on this issue.

I go back to Bill 2—I am not sure but I think there are a couple of members sitting in the House who served on the Bill 2 hearings—but on the very last day that the committee was hearing public testimony on Bill 2, which is the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board Act, we had a report tabled with the committee detailing a study of the auto insurance industry in the state of Massachusetts. It was the only jurisdiction with a system comparable to what Ontario was suggesting: the establishment of a rate-setting authority and the other mechanisms that went along with that rate-setting authority.

The history of Massachusetts since the institution of a comparable sort of initiative was sad, frightening and should have been of concern to all members. But, indeed, the government—and who knows how long it had this report in front of it—decided not to make it available to the committee until the very last day of public hearings.

In essence, they not only precluded us from travelling to Massachusetts or at the very least perhaps bringing up legislators from Massachusetts to appear before us, bringing up members of the insurance board from Massachusetts—people who had been involved in the industry, had gone through a comparable exercise and realized what the outcome was, and who could have alerted us all to the pitfalls inherent in what the government was attempting to do—but again they entered into this little game where they dropped this in our laps on the last day, where we had no opportunity to call witnesses, no opportunity even to study the report so that we could deal with it in a meaningful way during the committee deliberations.

What that report said was that it was a chaotic situation in the state of Massachusetts, that the rates under this system were, I think, third highest in the United States at the time of the writing of the report, that most of the private insurance companies had fled the state and that over 60% of the drivers in the state of Massachusetts were now in the high-priced Facility Association. That was a clear indication, a harbinger of what was to come in Ontario. The message was there; it was clear.

The government again decided to ignore the facts and the evidence of a jurisdiction that had done exactly what it was proceeding to do. They simply set that aside because of their political agenda, did not listen to witnesses, did not heed their concerns and warnings, and rushed into this headlong, into an extremely difficult situation, where now we have seen the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board being disbanded after a cost some estimate in the neighbourhood of \$12 million to \$15 million of taxpayers' money. For what? I will get into that again.

On two opportunities where that board has reported to the minister, both of those reports, again at a cost of millions and millions of dollars to taxpayers, were simply discarded, thrown out the window and had no attention paid to them.

An hon member: We're not keeping you up, are we, David?

Mr Runciman: I guess the member for St Catharines or—what is his riding, Lincoln? No, it is not, this member is from Lincoln—Kitchener, the member for Kitchener, is indicating his boredom with this debate. He is falling asleep. He probably would prefer to be back in Kitchener dealing with some of his tenants in his efforts to remove some of them from apartment buildings and phoning significant members of the community to ensure that his tenants do not complain to the press about the

treatment the member for Kitchener gives tenants in his apartment buildings. If the member wants me to continue to discuss that subject, because I happen to be very familiar with the details of that subject, I would be most pleased to do so at a future point.

In any event, we have the Massachusetts report and again, as I said—and I will tie this into what happened during the standing committee on general government, when we again had some vital information delivered to us on the last day of the hearings and other information withheld from us until the hearings were completed—when the members on the government side are concerned about obstructionist tactics, as they describe them, I think they have to look at the history of this and the way the opposition parties have been dealt with on this issue from day one.

There certainly has not been an upfront, honest approach by the government to deal in an open, frank way with members of the opposition parties. It has been an effort to obstruct and an effort to deceive. It has been an effort to mislead. It has been an effort to hide facts, important facts, from all of us in this Legislature and, perhaps more important, from the people of Ontario in respect to the government's intentions, its plans dealing with automobile insurance in the province of Ontario.

We talked earlier about the Osborne report and we had some of the government members making reference to a report that preceded Osborne, and that is the Slater report. Mr Slater was appointed by the member for Wilson Heights during his tenure, I believe, as the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. At that time, financial institutions fell under the purview of CCR. We had one minister looking after those responsibilities and doing a very capable job, I might say. Now, with this government growth mentality, they have split it into two ministries and we are seeing the bureaucracy grow, whereas in the past we had one minister not only responsible for CCR and responsible for financial institutions but, going back into the Conservative government days, also responsible for rent controls.

Hon Mr Elston: You were responsible for rent control too?

Mr Runciman: No, it was removed from me, I might say.

Mr Pelissero: You'd better clarify this, Bob.

Mr Runciman: Premier Miller, in his wisdom, prior to appointing me to Consumer and Commercial Relations, removed rent control from my area of responsibility—a wise decision.

The member for Wilson Heights appointed Mr Slater and, essentially, Mr Slater was assigned to look at what was called the liability crisis in North America at the time. It turned out, in a variety of cases put forward, that it was a phoney liability crisis; it was a crisis fabricated by the industry to elevate rates.

Mr Slater, as part of his study, I gather because of submissions made to him, took a brief look at automobile insurance. It certainly was not an in-depth study by any stretch of the imagination. Slater took a look at threshold no-fault. I believe he took a look at something submitted by the Insurance Bureau of Canada called smart no-fault, and indicated in his report that he found it somewhat attractive; that smart no-fault and the threshold approach was the way to go.

As a response to that and as a response, I gather, to growing political pressure and perhaps a way as a bridge over the election period of time, the government appointed Mr Justice Coulter Osborne. It assigned him the task of doing a very thorough review of automobile insurance and making recommendations

to the government, which he did in February 1988, after the government had acted. The government, as I said, did not wait to hear Mr Justice Coulter Osborne. It spent, I believe, \$1.4 million to have him prepare what has been described as the most comprehensive report on auto insurance ever done in North America.

The government's reasons have never been explained to any of us. I would love to hear the minister or his predecessor or the Premier stand up somewhere, some time, and explain how this whole process evolved: why the decision was taken to proceed with the massive intervention through Bill 2, the establishment of an insurance board, while Osborne was conducting his studies. Only several months prior to Osborne coming down with his report, this kind of decision was taken.

Mr D. R. Cooke: On a point of personal privilege, Mr Speaker: The member for Leeds-Grenville has made certain accusations against me. I am waiting to hear him substantiate them or else withdraw them. They are incorrect. They are not true.

1730

Mr Runciman: I did not make any accusations. I made some suggestions that perhaps the member might be more comfortable in another setting, dealing with some of his tenants.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr D. R. Cooke: First of all, I do not have an apartment building. Second, I do not have any tenants. Third, I have not made any such phone calls. I demand that the member for Leeds-Grenville withdraw those accusations or substantiate them.

Mr Runciman: If my facts are incorrect, I will certainly, at least temporarily, withdraw them until I confirm them.

Mr D. R. Cooke: I demand that the member for Leeds-Grenville withdraw them unqualifiedly, and if he wishes to substantiate them at some time when he has conducted his research, then he can reintroduce them into the debate.

The Deputy Speaker: I ask the member for Leeds-Grenville to just withdraw, please.

Mr Runciman: I will agree to that, Mr Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Can we keep the topic to the motion, please?

Mr Runciman: Yes, Mr Speaker, I will attempt to do that, but on occasions, as you can appreciate, it is difficult to do when you have interjections from across the floor—

Mr Neumann: All he did was yawn.

Mr D. R. Cooke: There were no interjections.

Mr Runciman: Well, it depends on how you interpret that sort of response. I look upon it as an interjection of sorts, and certainly a commentary, if you will, on my contribution to this debate, and a commentary which I did not appreciate, obviously.

We were talking about Bill 2 and the history of Bill 2 leading up to where we are today, and the fact that the Premier made the promise that he made in 1987, which again, as I suggested, has not been fulfilled and perhaps never would have been fulfilled.

I have said this in the past and I do not mind saying it again, that in respect to auto insurance and the impact on many in society, there is no real understanding on the part of the leader of the Liberal Party of the problems created by its initiatives for

many of the less fortunate in society. I will get into this in more detail when we get specific about Bill 68, but one of the contributions to the committee was from the Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues, and this was Bill 68 and a number of others dealing with low-income earners and homemakers and individuals who are certainly not in a position to cope financially with some of the problems that are going to be created for them and others in their comparable financial situations by the government's initiatives.

I was talking about Osborne and the fact that \$1.4 million of taxpayers' money was spent to have Osborne conduct his study in 1987-88, money which essentially has been wasted. The government will argue that it has adopted some of the recommendations incorporated in the Osborne report, but I think the key recommendations in respect to product reform were ignored, and those of course are the essential components of the Osborne report. So I think for all intents and purposes, although the government can pull out a number of areas where perhaps it did indeed follow Osborne's recommendations, the bottom line in the major recommendations were totally ignored.

We talked about the evolution of this and the establishment of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. One of the things that followed—I think it was in June 1988—was that the minister was presented with the report from the automobile insurance board in respect to the impact of rate classification changes, as I said, this crisis management, seat-of-the-pants, ad hoc management where the minister then asked the auto insurance board to review threshold no-fault, a choice product and product reform. I think there were three matters: two threshold proposals and something called choice which would offer consumers the choice between buying a tort insurance package or a pure no-fault package.

The automobile insurance board was assigned the task of looking at those three options and—not making recommendations; I am not sure if it was assigned the task of making recommendations—reporting to the government. Perhaps making observations might be a better description, rather than recommendations.

They did that, and members know that, like Osborne, they were not enthused about threshold no-fault. They felt it was not the way to go, but once again they were ignored. Again, we have seen under this particular situation in respect to product reform and in respect to rate-setting and rate classification changes they were also ignored. What in essence that meant was that those months and months of various individuals working on their assigned tasks and the millions of taxpayers' dollars were lost to all of us for ever.

I do have a Kitchener-Waterloo Record article here, which I am not at this point going to read into the record because I do not want to enter into this kind of a debate with the member for Kitchener, but I certainly will make it available to him. It deals with the issues I raised, and indeed makes some accusations which may be incorrect, but I will certainly make that available to him.

Mr D. R. Cooke: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: This is most uncalled for. The article in question is written by a fiction writer. It is complete fiction. The member for Leeds-Grenville should know that. It is not part of this debate. I demand that it be withdrawn. If it be raised again, I demand that the Speaker consider expelling the member from the House. This is disgusting.

Mr Runciman: I have already withdrawn the remarks. I am simply making this available. If the member has already

seen it, it is unnecessary, and we will leave it at that point. Continuing the debate, Mr Speaker—

Mr Hampton: You tapped the Liberal arrogance again, Bob.

Mr Runciman: Yes.

It is important, I think, that we also spend a little bit of time on looking at the activities of the automobile insurance board and the waste of money. I think that is an ingredient that perhaps we have not stressed enough in this Legislature during committee.

As I indicated, we have heard a variety of estimates—\$11 million to, I think, \$15 million spent by the automobile insurance board—and \$1.4 million was spent by the Osborne commission, so we could be looking at between \$12 million and \$17 or \$18 million, at the very least, of taxpayers' money which in essence has been wasted—millions of taxpayers' dollars.

While all of this was going on, we had the minister, in what can only be described, I think, as backroom dealings with members of the industry, and perhaps others whom I will not get into speculating on today, working up the effort which has been introduced as Bill 68, threshold no-fault, which is without doubt the toughest threshold in no-fault programs in North America and has a very devastating effect on innocent accident victims in this province. It was a backroom deal cooked up while the minister knew that his own insurance board was considering a variety of submissions and he was in a parallel operation, devising a plan that he intended to introduce as the government initiative.

I think that, when we talk about the way this has been handled by the government from day one—the promise to the electors; the waste of taxpayers' dollars; the massive intervention; the obstructionist tactics; the failure to provide all of the information to members of the justice committee and, when they did provide information, providing it at a point in time when it was of little use, and this sort of approach carrying on to the Bill 68 general government hearings, where we had important actuarial studies detailing the costs and the impact on benefits of this program tabled on the last day of public hearings, again, when witnesses would not have an opportunity to contribute on a meaningful basis with respect to those figures before us; the shenanigans that took place between the industry and the government, which have been confirmed in a letter made public by the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario dated October 1989, complimenting the government on changes which were not announced until the completion of the Bill 68 hearings—as I said, the insurance industry, confirmed by a letter from the Insurance Brokers Association, knew about those changes prior to the hearings even beginning—there is a great deal indeed that the public of Ontario has a right to be very much upset with.

1740

We have talked about this exercise, Bill 68 threshold no-fault, providing the insurance industry with a significant windfall, upwards of \$1 billion. The minister will argue that, the parliamentary assistant will argue that, but the facts are there. We know the tax break totals approximately \$143 million, we know the threshold and the reductions in payouts that are going to accrue to the insurance industry total a significant number, so we are looking in the neighbourhood of \$800 million or \$900 million at the very least. Depending on your interpretation of who can break the threshold, we could be looking

at a \$1-billion windfall to the industry in the first year of operation of this plan.

Obviously, many of us have concerns about that kind of windfall profit for the industry. We do not think it was necessary. We think at the very least, when we get into discussions on amendments, there could be and should be some softening of this threshold.

We personally do not believe in the no-fault approach. We believe it is an abdication of responsibility and in our party we believe in the ethic of responsibility, that people should be held responsible for their actions, and we have a great deal of difficulty with a no-fault principle.

At the same time, facing the reality of a 94-seat majority Liberal government, we believe that we have to make proposals and suggestions that could perhaps make this more palatable and more acceptable to the vast majority of Ontarians. Obviously, one of the ways that could be accomplished in a significant manner is some wording changes that would affect the threshold and would allow more accident victims to pierce that threshold. As we have seen by the actuarial studies conducted by the government itself, initially we were talking about 90% of the accident victims in this province who would not be able to pierce the threshold. The actuarial studies show that figure would be closer to 95% and could be as high as 97%. We are talking about 3% to 5% of accident victims in this province who would retain the right to sue.

Again, that is the sort of thing, the kind of message, that has to be gotten out to the consumers of this province, the six-million-plus drivers of this province, so they have a greater appreciation of how significantly their rights are being attacked by this Liberal government with its threshold no-fault plan.

In the first section of my contribution, I said I was dealing with the history, going back through the Bill 2 process and going back through the establishment of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board, the chaotic situation that occurred, the waste of taxpayers' dollars and the total evolution of this effort up until this point in time. Now I would like to move on to the hearings conducted by the general government committee on Bill 68.

As most members know, the government was most reluctant to have hearings. It wanted to have this legislation through by 1 December 1989, and under pressure from both opposition parties, the government consented to have public hearings.

We obviously wanted to travel at length across the province so that many Ontarians would have an opportunity to be heard on this issue, but we were restricted to four communities which had the opportunity to have a committee in those municipalities and provide their citizens with the opportunity to be heard. Again, we are dealing with a Liberal majority government and we had to take what we could get with respect to giving the people of Ontario an opportunity to be heard on this no-fault plan.

We started off those hearings, I felt, on a good foot. We were hearing comments from some of the Liberal members of the committee that they were sympathetic to some of the concerns, especially in respect to the head-injured and those with psychological injuries and their ability, their restriction and their elimination from access, to pierce the threshold, a host of those kinds of concerns on which the member for Hamilton Centre had expressed some public concerns. We had the member for Windsor-Walkerville, I believe, who had publicly expressed some concerns. We had the member for Durham Centre, who sat on the committee for I think two or three days and had expressed concerns about this legislation and its impact

on drivers and the fact that significant rights were being removed from drivers. He had expressed concerns. He was sitting on the committee.

Just from the general tenor of our first meeting or two, I was optimistic that we were going to have a really meaningful exercise in respect to not only listening to these people, but following through on many of their concerns and recommendations, which we would see result in amendments that would make this legislation better serve the needs of Ontarians.

I want to say that initial optimism quickly turned into disappointment. We had witness after witness—and I am not going to get into this at length, at this point in any event—get into testimony. I know the member for Welland-Thorold will remember one particular witness, Jeremy Rempel. It was very moving testimony from individuals like Jeremy who had suffered serious accidents.

They had no vested interest in this legislation. They had already suffered their accident. They had already had access to the courts and they had already had their needs served by the current system. I am not saying they found no faults with the current system. They indeed felt changes were necessary, but they were very much concerned about the initiative of this government and its impact on future innocent accident victims in the province. We had a number of those kinds of individuals, as I said, appear before us with some very moving testimony. They had had no vested interest and nothing to gain, but they were very much concerned about future accident victims in this province.

We were in Sudbury. The member for Sudbury East is here, along with the member for Welland-Thorold. I know some of the testimony we heard in Sudbury was extremely moving. It had quite an impact on those of us in opposition.

When you hear that kind of testimony, you expect, at least from the government side, from the Liberal members, to hear some understanding, some appreciation and some sympathy for the points of view being expressed and the efforts to relate to their own situations and to the accidents and difficulties they had gone through and how future innocent accident victims in this province would be dealt with by this legislation.

But instead of that kind of thing occurring, we had the most inane, unbelievable comments from some of the members serving on the government side. You would shudder with embarrassment when they would get up and ask questions which had no relevance whatsoever and did not deal in a meaningful way in any way, shape or form with the concerns or testimony that we had just listened to.

I know the member for Welland-Thorold and all the members of the opposition parties and myself got extremely agitated during the course of these hearings, not so much because we were moved and touched by the testimony, but I would say because we were very seriously agitated by the reactions and responses and non-responses of the Liberal members serving on this committee.

1750

They were there simply as rubber-stampers for the executive council. They had no meaningful role to play other than to be sheep for the government, for the executive council and for the Minister of Financial Institutions. They were not there to listen, they were not there to hear what these people were saying and they were certainly not there to act upon what those people said and those concerns that they expressed to all of us, or attempted to express to all of us, but only the opposition members apparently were listening.

Mr Speaker, as you know, I am on occasion prone to getting upset about issues that I feel strongly about, but I do not think I have ever felt more strongly about an issue and about the actions of the government members than I have during the course of these committee deliberations. I want to say that—

Interjection.

Mr Runciman: That is probably a good idea. I should go through that. We have Ms Oddie Munro, the member for Hamilton Centre, a very serious disappointment, because at the outset she had expressed some serious concerns about the head-injured. She had made public statements, and I gather in her working background prior to becoming a member of this Legislature she had some understanding and association with those individuals, people who have suffered serious head injuries. I expected much, much more from that member, and what we got, as I said, were inane comments and no meaningful contribution at all. She was a very serious personal disappointment for me in respect to how she reacted during that committee. Obviously she still has aspirations to return to cabinet. I think that those aspirations are—

Mr Kormos: Wish upon a star.

Mr Runciman: That is a good one, a wish upon a star. I think that she certainly does not have much hope. In any event, I think she should have stood up for what she had indicated earlier she believed in.

I served as a government backbencher. When we deal with issues like this, I know how tough it is, especially when you are a newcomer and have aspirations to climb up the ladder, how difficult it is to stand up on principle on behalf of the people you are representing and make your views known, and not only make your views known in caucus but make them known in public and be prepared to stand up and take the bitter pill, take the medicine and fight for what you believe in.

Members can say, "Well, that's fine for you, Runciman, to say that." But I am speaking from experience, because I did it, and I did pay a bit of a penalty during the Suncor debate, Mr Speaker, as you may recall, when I disagreed with the government in respect to its decision to acquire an interest in the Suncor oil company.

I implored the members of the committee, the Liberal members of that committee, when we were dealing with such an important issue, an issue that is going to affect the lives of most Ontarians, to take that kind of stand, to be courageous, to be brave, to stand up on behalf of their constituents, of the concerned people in this province, of innocent accident victims for the future in this province. But they were not prepared to do it, they simply were not prepared to do it. They did not have the guts, the intestinal fortitude to stand up and be counted when it mattered most. They did not have the guts to do it.

I want to talk about the member for Guelph. I like the member for Guelph, the parliamentary assistant to the minister, but again, he acted as nothing much more than a mouthpiece for the government in this. I want to say I appreciate his position. He is getting an extra \$9,000 or \$10,000 a year to be parliamentary assistant. He does not want to give up that to perhaps stand up and express concerns. But I will say this for the member: He made some public comments. He was quite frank in some of his public comments, which I appreciated. When he talked about the committee hearings he said, "We were clobbered." He was right, they were clobbered. But obviously they did not listen.

I want to talk about one other thing in respect to these committee hearings. J. Bradford Nixon, the member for York Mills—

The Acting Speaker (Mr Cureatz): The honourable member, whom I have nothing but the greatest respect for, has on a number of occasions now referred to members by their individual names. I would only ask him to try to refer to them by their ridings, since I anticipate this will be a long discussion that he will be having and he might as well get in the habit of doing it now.

Mr Runciman: Maybe later in the debate I will refer to him as that. I am just starting to get warmed up here.

An hon member: J. Bradford.

Mr Runciman: J. Bradford, yes. I want to say about that particular member, who was a knowledgeable guy, there is no question about it, that he served as a policy assistant, I believe, to the member for Wilson Heights, so he had some familiarity with this issue from day one. I want to talk about the personification of arrogance. The personification of Liberal arrogance is vested in J. Bradford Nixon.

Talk about reneging on deals. I want to put this one on the record because I was the subject of some public criticism, and perhaps justifiably so, because of using unparliamentary language. On the last day of the public committee hearings we had stacks of actuarial studies tabled in front of us. We had no opportunity to look at those, no opportunity for witnesses to be heard and to critically analyse those. I was prepared to give up 15 minutes of testimony to allow someone to have 15 minutes to analyse and critique those studies that had been dropped on our lap the last public hearing day.

Mr Nixon, that member—pardon me, Mr Speaker—the member for York Mills indicated that he was prepared to allow me to set aside my time so that we could call Professor Jack Carr, a professor of economics, to have 15 lousy minutes to comment on those stacks of actuarial studies. The agreement was made and, following rotation, the chairman called on me and said, “We’ll now call on the witness to take up the time of Mr Runciman.” Mr Nixon, the member for York Mills, said: “I object. I don’t want him to appear.” He reneged on the deal, he reneged on a deal he had made a half an hour earlier. I want to say I lost my cool. I did indeed use language which was inappropriate, which was unfortunate and which I regret using. But I want to say if there was ever an occasion when that kind of language was justified, that was the occasion.

Mr D. S. Cooke: It’s routine Liberal policy now.

Mr Runciman: Yes, it certainly is.

Interjections.

Mr Runciman: Mr Speaker, it seems the Liberals are trying to stifle debate here. They simply will not let me continue, with all of these interjections and interventions and loud noises. I know this is extremely difficult for some of the Liberal members, especially those who served on this committee.

I want to go over some of the others. Yvonne—I hate to use first names, Mr Speaker.

Mrs Marland: Ottawa-Rideau.

Mr Runciman: Ottawa-Rideau? No, it is not Ottawa-Rideau.

Mrs Marland: Yvonne O’Neill?

Mr Runciman: No, Mrs LeBourdais.

An hon member: Linda.

Mr Runciman: Linda, sorry.

An hon member: Etobicoke West.

Mr Runciman: Etobicoke West. This is another member whose contribution I want to make note of during this debate, the member for Etobicoke West, Mrs LeBourdais, and the most important contribution she made during this debate. She was there and I made some comment in respect to no meaningful amendments coming forward. Her interjection was, “It’s not over till the fat lady sings.” In response to that I said, “Is there a certain cabinet minister going to attend later today?” She reacted with great indignation that I had personally insulted a member of the executive council. I had mentioned no names.

Later on that day, on a point of order, she took up approximately 15 minutes of important committee time, when we could have been hearing witnesses who had a significant contribution to make in respect to this legislation, to talk about that kind of comment, trying, I suppose, to look good in the eyes of that particular cabinet minister, or look good in the eyes of perhaps the decision-makers who make these kinds of appointments to cabinet. “Look, here I am, the little member for Etobicoke West standing up on behalf of and fighting for cabinet ministers.” Where the devil was she fighting on behalf of innocent accident victims in this province? She just was not there.

She gets up and spends 15 or 20 minutes fighting about an innocent comment, about someone who happens to be overweight and may be a member of the Ontario Liberal cabinet, but she will not say a damned word about the concerns and the interests of innocent accident victims in this province. She should be ashamed, along with all her cohorts in the Liberal Party who sat in those hearings, who sat on their hands, who sat quietly, who did not participate in any meaningful way and did not make any kind of contribution that helped those kinds of people in this province.

I want to say again that all of those Liberals have a lot to answer for and I am going to, during the course of this discussion, mention each and every one of them. If I have to do it on a number of occasions I am prepared to do it, because I want the message to go out to their constituents that: “Those people who say they are representing you were not there when it counted. They were not there when it counted. They were not prepared to stand up and speak out on your behalf—not one word.”

On motion by Mr Runciman, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1800.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS
(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|--|
| Adams, Peter | Peterborough | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment |
| Allen, Richard | Hamilton West | NDP | |
| Ballinger, William G. | Durham-York | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Beer, Hon Charles | York North | L | Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. | Muskoka-Georgian Bay | L | Minister of Tourism and Recreation, minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Bossy, Maurice L. | Chatham-Kent | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Bradley, Hon James J. | St Catharines | L | Minister of the Environment |
| Brandt, Andrew S. | Samia | PC | Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party |
| Breaugh, Michael J. | Oshawa | NDP | First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Brown, Michael A. | Algoma-Manitoulin | L | |
| Bryden, Marion | Beaches-Woodbine | NDP | |
| Callahan, Robert V. | Brampton South | L | |
| Campbell, Sterling | Sudbury | L | |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor | Oriole | L | Minister of Health |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. | Oakville South | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Charlton, Brian A. | Hamilton Mountain | NDP | |
| Chiarelli, Robert | Ottawa West | L | |
| Cleary, John C. | Cornwall | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Collins, Hon Shirley | Wentworth East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons. |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. | Renfrew North | L | Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities, Minister of Skills Development |
| Cooke, David R. | Kitchener | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Citizenship |
| Cooke, David S. | Windsor-Riverside | NDP | House leader |
| Cordiano, Joseph | Lawrence | L | |
| Cousens, W. Donald | Markham | PC | |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. | London North | PC | |
| Cureatz, Sam L. | Durham East | PC | Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Curling, Alvin | Scarborough North | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Daigeler, Hans | Nepean | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Revenue |
| Dietsch, Michael M. | St Catharines-Brock | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour |
| Eakins, John F. | Victoria-Haliburton | L | |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. | Perth | L | Speaker |
| Elliot, R. Walter | Halton North | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Housing |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. | Bruce | L | Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Financial Institutions |
| Epp, Herbert A. | Waterloo North | L | |
| Eves, Ernie L. | Parry Sound | PC | House leader |
| Farnan, Michael | Cambridge | NDP | |
| Faubert, Frank | Scarborough-Ellesmere | L | |
| Fawcett, Joan M. | Northumberland | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Skills Development |
| Ferraro, Rick E. | Guelph | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|---|
| Fleet, David | High Park-Swansea | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Fontaine, Hon René | Cochrane North | L | Minister of Northern Development |
| Fulton, Ed | Scarborough East | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation |
| Furlong, Allan W. | Durham Centre | L | |
| Grandmaître, Bernard C. | Ottawa East | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health |
| Grier, Ruth A. | Etobicoke-Lakeshore | NDP | |
| Haggerty, Ray | Niagara South | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| Hampton, Howard | Rainy River | NDP | |
| Harris, Michael D. | Nipissing | PC | |
| Hart, Hon Christine E. | York East | L | Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Henderson, D. James | Etobicoke-Humber | L | Parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Hošek, Chaviva | Oakwood | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet |
| Jackson, Cameron | Burlington South | PC | |
| Johnson, Jack | Wellington | PC | |
| Johnston, Richard F. | Scarborough West | NDP | |
| Kanter, Ron | St Andrew-St Patrick | L | |
| Kerrio, Vincent G. | Niagara Falls | L | |
| Keyes, Kenneth A. | Kingston and The Islands | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education |
| Kormos, Peter | Welland-Thorold | NDP | |
| Kozyra, Taras B. | Port Arthur | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Northern Development |
| Kwinter, Hon Monte | Wilson Heights | L | Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Laughren, Floyd | Nickel Belt | NDP | |
| LeBourdais, Linda | Etobicoke West | L | |
| Leone, Laureano | Downsview | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Lipsett, Ron | Grey | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy |
| Lupusella, Tony | Dovercourt | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Government Services |
| MacDonald, Keith | Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings | L | |
| Mackenzie, Bob | Hamilton East | NDP | |
| Mahoney, Steven W. | Mississauga West | L | |
| Mancini, Hon Remo | Essex South | L | Minister of Revenue |
| Marland, Margaret | Mississauga South | PC | |
| Martel, Shelley | Sudbury East | NDP | |
| Matrundola, Gino | Willowdale | L | |
| McCague, George R. | Simcoe West | PC | |
| McClelland, Carman | Brampton North | L | |
| McGuigan, James F. | Essex-Kent | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| McLean, Allan K. | Simcoe East | PC | |
| McLeod, Hon Lyn | Fort William | L | Minister of Energy, Minister of Natural Resources |
| Miclash, Frank | Kenora | L | |
| Miller, Gordon I. | Norfolk | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation |
| Morin, Hon Gilles E. | Carleton East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Morin-Strom, Karl E. | Sault Ste Marie | NDP | |
| Neumann, David E. | Brantford | L | |
| Nicholas, Cindy | Scarborough Centre | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Solicitor General |
| Nixon, J. Bradford | York Mills | L | |
| Nixon, Hon Robert F. | Brant-Haldimand | L | Deputy Premier, Treasurer of Ontario, Minister of Economics |
| Oddie Munro, Lily | Hamilton Centre | L | |
| Offer, Hon Steven | Mississauga North | L | Solicitor General |
| O'Neil, Hon Hugh P. | Quinte | L | Minister of Mines |
| O'Neill, Yvonne | Ottawa-Rideau | L | |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|---|
| Owen, Bruce | Simcoe Centre | L | |
| Patten, Hon Richard | Ottawa Centre | L | Minister of Correctional Services |
| Pelissero, Harry E. | Lincoln | L | |
| Peterson, Hon David R. | London Centre | L | Premier, President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Philip, Ed | Etobicoke-Rexdale | NDP | |
| Phillips, Hon Gerry | Scarborough-Agincourt | L | Minister of Labour |
| Poirier, Jean | Prescott and Russell | L | Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Pollock, Jim | Hastings-Peterborough | PC | |
| Polsinelli, Claudio | Yorkview | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General |
| Poole, Dianne | Eglinton | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Pope, Alan W. | Cochrane South | PC | |
| Pouliot, Gilles | Lake Nipigon | NDP | |
| Rae, Bob | York South | NDP | Leader of the Official Opposition |
| Ramsay, Hon David | Timiskaming | L | Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Ray, Michael C. | Windsor-Walkerville | L | |
| Reville, David | Riverdale | NDP | Chief whip |
| Reycraft, Douglas R. | Middlesex | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Treasurer and Minister of Economics |
| Riddell, Jack | Huron | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources |
| Roberts, Marietta L. D. | Elgin | L | |
| Runciman, Robert W. | Leeds-Grenville | PC | |
| Ruprecht, Tony | Parkdale | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services |
| Scott, Hon Ian G. | St George-St David | L | Attorney General |
| Smith, David W. | Lambton | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Correctional Services |
| Smith, E. Joan | London South | L | Chief government whip |
| Sola, John | Mississauga East | L | |
| Sorbara, Hon Gregory S. | York Centre | L | Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| South, Larry | Frontenac-Addington | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Mines |
| Sterling, Norman W. | Carleton | PC | |
| Stoner, Norah | Durham West | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities |
| Sullivan, Barbara | Halton Centre | L | |
| Sweeney, Hon John | Kitchener-Wilmot | L | Minister of Housing and Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Tatham, Charlie | Oxford | L | |
| Velshi, Murad | Don Mills | L | |
| Villeneuve, Noble | Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry | PC | Chief whip |
| Ward, Hon Christopher C. | Wentworth North | L | Minister of Government Services, government House leader |
| Wildman, Bud | Algoma | NDP | |
| Wilson, Hon Mavis | Dufferin-Peel | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Wiseman, Douglas J. | Lanark-Renfrew | PC | |
| Wong, Hon Robert C. | Fort York | L | Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for the Ontario Human Rights Commission, minister responsible for multiculturalism, minister responsible for race relations |
| Wrye, Hon William | Windsor-Sandwich | L | Minister of Transportation |
| Vacant | Ottawa South | | |

COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Standing Committees

Administration of justice: chair, Mr Chiarelli; vice-chair, Mr McClelland; members, Messrs D. R. Cooke, Hampton, Kanter, Kormos, Miss Nicholas, Messrs Polsinelli, Runciman, D. W. Smith and Sterling; clerk, Douglas Arnott.

Estimates: chair, Mr McCague; vice-chair, Mr Cousens; members, Messrs Charlton, Cleary, Henderson, Matrundola, Miclash, Philip, Miss Roberts, Mrs. E. J. Smith and Mr Villeneuve; clerk, Harold Brown.

Finance and economic affairs: chair, Mr Mahoney; vice-chair, Mr Faubert; members, Mrs Cunningham, Messrs Daigeler, Ferraro, Haggerty, Ms Hošek, Messrs Mackenzie, McLean, Morin-Strom and Reycraft; clerk, Lisa Freedman.

General government: chair, Mr Pelissero; vice-chair, Mrs LeBourdais; members, Ms Bryden, Messrs Carrothers, Charlton, Furlong, McGuigan, J. B. Nixon, Runciman, Velshi and Wiseman; clerk, Franco Carrozza.

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Ombudsman: chair, Mr Velshi; vice-chair, Mr Kanter; members, Mr Bossy, Ms Bryden, Messrs Carrothers, D. R. Cooke, Cousens, Henderson, MacDonald, Philip and Pollock; clerk, Franco Carrozza.

Public accounts: chair, Mr Philip; vice-chair, Mr Pouliot; members, Messrs Adams, Ballinger, Cordiano, Cousens, Curling, Harris, Leone, Miss Martel and Ms Poole; clerk, Tannis Manikel.

Regulations and private bills: chair, Mr Callahan; members, Messrs Bossy, Jackson, Kanter, MacDonald, Mackenzie, Morin-Strom, Ms Oddie Munro, Messrs Pollock, Ruprecht and Tatham; clerk, Lisa Freedman.

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Social development: chair, Mrs O'Neill; vice-chair, Mrs Fawcett; members, Mr Allen, Mrs Cunningham, Messrs Elliot, Grandmaître, Jackson, Neumann, R. F. Johnston, Keyes and Mrs Stoner; clerk, Todd Decker.

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Constitutional and intergovernmental affairs: chair, Mr Furlong; members, Messrs Allen, Breaugh, Epp, Eves, Grandmaître, Harris, Ms Hošek, Ms Oddie Munro, Mr Polsinelli and Miss Roberts; clerk, Deborah Deller.

Education: chair, Mr Campbell; vice-chair, Mr Miclash; members, Messrs D. S. Cooke, Furlong, Jackson, R. F. Johnston, Keyes, Mahoney, Mrs Marland, Mrs O'Neill and Ms Poole; clerk, Tannis Manikel.

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Special Committee

Parliamentary precinct: co-chairs, Hon Mr Edighoffer and Mr Epp; members, Mr Pouliot, Mrs Smith and Mr Villeneuve; clerk, Smirle Forsyth.

CONTENTS

Tuesday 1 May 1990

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| Members' statements | | |
| Victims of crime | 939 | |
| Mr Allen | | |
| Timber licence | 939 | |
| Mr Pollock | | |
| Child and family services | 939 | |
| Mrs O'Neill | | |
| Welland Jaycees | 939 | |
| Mr Kormos | | |
| Orillia Perch Festival | 939 | |
| Mr McLean | | |
| Tenants' after-hours telephone service | 940 | |
| Ms Poole | | |
| Government House leader | 940 | |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | | |
| Hospital beds | 940 | |
| Mr Cureatz | | |
| Education Week | 940 | |
| Mr Keyes | | |
| Statements by the ministry | | |
| Community service employees | 941 | |
| Mr Beer | | |
| Water and sewage programs | 941 | |
| Mr Sweeney | | |
| Disabled person parking permit | 942 | |
| Mr Wrye | | |
| Responses | | |
| Water and sewage programs | 942 | |
| Mrs Grier | | |
| Disabled person parking permit | 942 | |
| Mr Allen | | |
| Community service employees | 942 | |
| Mr Allen | | |
| Disabled person parking permit | 943 | |
| Mrs Marland | | |
| Community service employees | 943 | |
| Mrs Marland | | |
| Water and sewage programs | 943 | |
| Mrs Marland | | |
| Disabled person parking permit | 943 | |
| Mr McCague | | |
| Oral questions | | |
| Budget | 943 | |
| Mr B. Rae | | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Rent review | 944 | |
| Mr B. Rae | | |
| Mr Sweeney | | |
| Economic outlook | 945 | |
| Mr Brandt | | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Hospital financing | 948 | |
| Mr Eves | | |
| Mrs Caplan | | |
| Trucking industry | 948 | |
| Mr Pouliot | | |
| Mr Wrye | | |
| Cultural financing | 949 | |
| Mr Wiseman | | |
| Ms Hart | | |
| Automotive industry | 949 | |
| Mr M. C. Ray | | |
| Mr Kwinter | | |
| Workers' compensation | 950 | |
| Mr Morin-Strom | | |
| Mr Phillips | | |
| Chicken industry | 950 | |
| Mr Villeneuve | | |
| Mr Ramsay | | |
| Water pipeline | 950 | |
| Mr Epp | | |
| Mr Sweeney | | |
| Waste management | 951 | |
| Mrs Grier | | |
| Mr Bradley | | |
| Property Assessment Corp | 951 | |
| Mr Jackson | | |
| Mr Mancini | | |
| Women's issues | 952 | |
| Mrs O'Neill | | |
| Mrs Wilson | | |
| Assistance to tobacco farmers | 952 | |
| Mr Wildman | | |
| Mr R. F. Nixon | | |
| Petitions | | |
| Diapers | 953 | |
| Mrs Grier | | |
| Closing of campgrounds | 953 | |
| Mr Villeneuve | | |
| Government motion | | |
| Time allocation, motion 30 | 953 | |
| Mr Runciman | | 954 |
| Adjourned | | 963 |
| Other business | | |
| Prime Minister of Lithuania | 946 | |
| Mr Fleet | | |
| Mr Cureatz | | |
| Mr B. Rae | | |
| Mr R. F. Johnston | | |
| Adjournment | 963 | |
| Alphabetical list of members | 964 | |

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Le mardi 1 Mai 1990

Déclaration ministérielle

| | |
|--|------------|
| Personnel des services communautaires | 941 |
| M. Beer | |



Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 2 May 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le mercredi 2 mai 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Languages in Hansard

Hansard reports all debates in English or French as spoken by the participants. It does not translate remarks made in either language. Headings and tables of contents reflect language use.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 2 May 1990

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

ESTIMATES

Hon Mr Elston: In my capacity as Chairman of Management Board, I would like to deliver a message from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, signed by his own hand.

The Speaker: The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the services of the province for the year ending 31 March 1991 and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly. It is signed by His Honour Lincoln Alexander.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

OSHAWA GENERALS

Mr Breagh: It is too bad the member for Kitchener is not here, but he may be off on a crying jag today, because last night at the Civic Auditorium in Oshawa the fat lady sang for the Kitchener Rangers. The new champions of the Ontario Junior A hockey league are, of course, the Oshawa Generals.

Last night was another good night at the Civic. The Rangers ran into a product of the Oshawa Minor Hockey Association, a young guy named Kevin Butt. He just stoned the Rangers all night long. This is really quite a good hockey team. They have speed, they like to hit, they can skate, they have more moves than the dancers at the Dynasty.

The coaching staff, Rick Cornacchia and his crew, really have these boys ready. John Humphreys—I hate to say a good word about an old Tory—runs a class hockey team and they did well. They are getting ready now because they are going down to Hamilton. The Memorial Cup is there. The best hockey teams at the junior level from across Canada will be present for the Memorial Cup showdown.

We think this is the year of the Generals. They have had a couple of shots at it in recent years. They have a good team this year. They are well coached and well prepared. They have the support of all the people of Oshawa. We had a good rally for them at the Oshawa Centre earlier this week. They have the support of the community, and on 14 May the members are all invited to come to Oshawa because we are going to have yet another rally at the Civic Auditorium when the Generals bring home the Memorial Cup.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Mr Pope: I have to make a comment on the interesting difference of opinion between the Treasurer and the Premier yesterday with respect to the current economic situation that faces many Ontarians: loss of jobs, declining employment, increasing unemployment rates, plant closures, indications of declining private sector investment, inflation and high interest rates—all an indication of a provincial economy that is facing some grave challenges ahead.

It is interesting to note that the response of this government to date has been to accuse the federal government. We all know that high interest rates are one of the vehicles to combat inflation. Statistics Canada has told us that one of the main contributors to inflation over the past two years has been

government tax increases at all levels. This government has led the way with \$2.6 billion in tax increases over the past two years—32 different tax increases. It has been one of the main contributors to inflation in Ontario.

Rather than casting blame, they should look within themselves, because they are robbing people of discretionary income. They are discouraging private sector investment. They are putting out the signal that Ontario is not a good place to invest money and create jobs. We cannot afford this kind of leadership.

EARTH DAY

Mr Adams: The Earth Day Ontario co-ordinating office is in Peterborough, the base for activities throughout the province. It is one of the spinoffs of the Our Common Future workshop sponsored by the city's sustainable development committee last October.

Earth Day was celebrated throughout the city and county of Peterborough. There were tree plantings, waterway cleanups, plays, poster competitions and a museum exhibit—a myriad of activities.

Both school boards, the city, county and township governments, Sir Sandford Fleming College, Trent University, the Boy Scouts, the downtown business improvement area group and a vast array of other groups were heavily involved. It seems to me that an Earth Day sermon was preached in every church.

A culmination of these activities was the Eco Fair in and around Peterborough Square. The BIA had a waste management booth, there was a corn stove on display and you could make your own bird feeder, study the city pollution control plan, hear the concerns of the Kawartha Rail Trail and Temagami groups and learn about organic gardening, household waste management and indisposable diapers. Even the MPP had a display.

Of course, one day is not enough. We should all remember the separate school board's reminder that education and environmental awareness are a year-round commitment. My thanks to all the Peterborough Earth Day volunteers.

HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Miss Martel: The proposed health professions procedural code has given rise to new concerns regarding the health professions legislation review process. The language of the code has now negatively impacted upon health services delivered by other professions outside the review process.

Several examples include:

1. "The definitions of 'diagnosis' and 'a licensed act' and of 'harm' would preclude almost all of the initial assessment and joining work done in pastoral counselling," writes the Pastoral Institute of Northern Ontario. Their doors will close if that occurs.

2. Counsellors at Collège Cambrian College in Sudbury note: "It will become illegal for analysts, psychotherapists, counsellors and many other mental health professionals to practise, because it is understood by all involved that there is a risk of mental pain or anguish. Many of them stand to lose their jobs as a result."

3. The Anglican clergy of the deanery of Sudbury-Manitoulin believes, "Section 2706 seems to be a rather clumsy

attempt to exclude clergy from the effects of the code, but it causes more difficulties than it resolves."

4. The native friendship centre in Sudbury concludes: "Your proposed legislation will have a serious impact on our growth and healing. This legislation will once more criminalize our spiritual and healing ceremonies."

Instead of the Minister of Health telling these groups, as she did in a recent letter, that their views will be considered by ministry staff as the legislation is prepared, she should meet with them now to come up with acceptable language that will not threaten the good work that they do.

1340

TRAVEL INDUSTRY COMPENSATION FUND

Mr McLean: My statement is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and relates to the recent collapse of Thomson and Odyssey.

According to recent press reports, the minister suggested there might not be enough money in the Ontario travel industry compensation fund to cover the expected \$8-million cost of the collapse of Thomson and Odyssey. It is my understanding that no payments have been made into this fund for the past two years and that the regulations never took into account the possibility of an airline going bankrupt, when the ministry knew there was trouble as early as January.

The minister has also said that refunds would be mailed and handled by travel agents and that forms would be available by the end of the week. The minister said all this before he even discussed this matter with travel professionals, who are the people who must face the public. He has placed Ontario's travel professionals on the firing line. He has placed them in an extremely awkward position.

It appears the minister is more interested in making headlines, rather than in providing travel professionals and consumers with detailed information and smoothing out the refund claim process. The Toronto Star claims that it may be two or three months before payments will be made and that the claim forms are expected to be in travel agents' offices by 11 May.

The minister has handled this matter poorly. The statements he has made concerning the refund claim procedures are irresponsible and very unprofessional.

LANDFILL SITE

Mrs Fawcett: I would like to inform members of this House of the impending danger should the ground and surface waters in the northeast portion of my riding become contaminated if the Marmoraton mine is chosen as a landfill site for Metropolitan Toronto's garbage. Should this site be chosen and leachate find its way into the Crowe River, the Trent River and the ground waters of the area, it would have a devastating effect on the quality of life of every member in the community.

The town of Campbellford is located on the Trent River system and is very dependent on the tourism industry. Should the Trent River system become contaminated, it would be a major blow to the town. Not only that, but the surrounding area is very dependent on the agrifood industry, and should water become contaminated, it would make it impossible for the farmers to feed their animals and irrigate their crops. Most importantly, the residents of the surrounding area depend on this water for drinking.

Many of the area residents are most concerned about the possible adverse effects and have in fact formed an organization, the Campbellford TNT, which stands for Take No Trash.

They are vehemently opposed to any suggestion that the Marmoraton mine site accept Metro's garbage. I have spoken with them on numerous occasions and am most supportive of their efforts to protect and preserve the environment.

The government of Ontario is committed to the reduction of waste that we put in landfill sites, and this was reinforced by the recent budget. The Environmental Assessment Act and the Environmental Protection Act were established to preserve and maintain the water quality in this province. I will strive for the assurances that any future consideration of the Marmoraton mine site will fall under these and any other possible environmental checks in order to preserve and maintain the water quality.

EDUCATION FINANCING

Mr Kormos: Yesterday 1,000 Notre Dame high school students in Welland left their classrooms to march to the new headquarters of the Welland County Roman Catholic Separate School Board. Their march was one of protest, motivated by fear and anger. It followed a similar protest by hundreds of teachers and parents on Sunday.

These students, teachers and parents are intensely concerned about the quality of education in their schools. They are intensely aware that inadequate funding will result in larger class sizes, fewer teachers and the elimination of programs.

The scenario is not new. Over the past few years, we have seen community colleges, Niagara College among them, terminating staff and eliminating programs. Now high schools are being forced to follow suit. If anyone dares think even for a moment that this is restricted to community colleges or, now, Catholic high schools, well, they had better look again. Schools in both the Catholic and public school systems are going to be hit.

Education is expensive; there is no doubt about it. Quality education all the more so. But teachers, parents and students, like those in Welland and area who have been objecting to the cutbacks, are being victimized by a provincial government right here in Ontario that has failed to fulfil its obligations to share in the funding of quality education, both at the college level and at the high school level.

Municipal taxpayers, home owners, are being taxed to death because of a Liberal regime here at Queen's Park that is transferring more and more financial obligation on to the municipalities of Ontario. Maybe the next demonstration of protest by these concerned students, parents and teachers should be right here at Queen's Park where the real responsibility lies, with this government, these Liberals and this Premier.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Mr Sterling: I rise today to commend some residents of the Ottawa-Carleton region for the fine community service work they have recently undertaken.

Zone G5 of the Royal Canadian Legion has been working with a company called IMPACT to improve crime prevention techniques in the Ottawa-Carleton area. The legion has raised \$33,000 towards the purchase and installation of three COPS computer units, which are part of an innovative system designed to facilitate the exchange of information from police to communities. This approach is currently being used in 18 police forces across North America. The Community Organization and Prevention System allows a police force to make up to 100 phone calls to community contacts over a one-hour period. It can be used effectively to prevent crime, for instance, when a dangerous individual is known to be in an area.

However, before the project can be fully implemented, the provincial sales tax, which totals a whopping \$2,640, has to be paid. Today I call on the Minister of Revenue to wave this taxation. For community service to be a complete success, there must be involvement on the part of all members of the community. The citizens of Ottawa-Carleton have done their part. Now it is this government's turn. In this case, the government could make its contribution by forgiving the sales tax. Such an action would demonstrate that the government of Ontario cares about Ottawa-Carleton's wellbeing. I think it is time for them to pay their share.

NORTHERN POWER DEVELOPMENT

Mr Miclash: This past Thursday took me to the very northern portion of my riding to meet with a number of groups in Sandy Lake, a first nation settlement north of Sioux Lookout.

During my visit to the reserve, a major concern regarding the establishment of power dams was presented to me by a group of students from Sandy Lake, the Sandy Lake band council and the Severn River Coalition.

The group of students made it very clear to me that they did not want their future in the north affected by development that would flood their traditional land use areas and homes. As well, the coalition, a very dedicated group, presented arguments indicating that the residents of Bearskin Lake, Deer Lake, Fort Severn, Kee-Way-Win, Muskrat Dam, along with those I met at Sandy, have requested that the leadership of this northern area put forth a strong plea to have the Severn River area declared a dam-free zone.

Deliberations throughout the day brought forth many examples of other areas throughout the country that have been flooded in order that the construction of power dams might go ahead. The people of the Severn River area do not want to see this happening to their traditional land use areas.

In closing, might I congratulate and offer my support to the people along the Severn River and in particular to those who have given of their time to collect the views on this most important subject, the Severn River Coalition.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

AIDE SOCIALE

Hon Mr Beer: I would like to inform members of another step in the ongoing reform of Ontario's social assistance system.

As members know, last year we embarked on an ambitious program of reform. In addition, my predecessor announced our intention to move forward with new social assistance legislation.

The very first recommendation put forth by the Social Assistance Review Committee was that Ontario's two pieces of welfare legislation be merged into a single, unified act. The SARC report acknowledged that new legislation is a key requirement for meaningful change in social assistance.

The process my ministry is embarking upon will result in one piece of legislation, which recognizes the realities faced by social assistance recipients in the 1990s.

The General Welfare Assistance Act was proclaimed in the 1950s, and the Family Benefits Act in the mid-1960s. Ontario's needs have outgrown these decades-old statutes.

A new legislative framework is, I am proud to say, an indication of this government's commitment to the type of fun-

damental reforms advocated by SARC. In keeping with that commitment, I am pleased to inform members today of the creation of a group of experts to advise me in the development of new social assistance legislation for this province.

The Advisory Group on New Social Assistance Legislation will be chaired by Professor Allan Moscovitch, associate professor in the school of social work at Ottawa's Carleton University. Allan Moscovitch has dealt capably with many challenges during his distinguished career. He has practical experience in the delivery of social assistance as well as the perspective of a social services educator.

1350

Over the past year, my ministry has been busy laying the groundwork necessary for the activities of the advisory group. We have identified no fewer than 230 issues which must be addressed in the course of developing new legislation.

A legislation unit has been established in my ministry to support the activities of the advisory group. Six project teams are being established to examine legal issues, the benefit structure, the disability determination process, employment services, Indian community issues and delivery and funding issues.

Les travaux du groupe consultatif constituent un exercice pratique qui se traduira par une réforme fondamentale en faveur des personnes ayant besoin d'aide sociale.

Ce groupe consultatif, composé de douze personnes, me fera part directement de ses observations dans le cadre de rencontres et de rapports prévus à intervalles réguliers. Les conseils de ces experts porteront sur la nouvelle législation et sur une évaluation du nouveau programme d'intégration sociale et de transition à l'emploi, programme de mon ministère mieux connu sous l'acronyme PISTE.

À la suite des activités que j'ai décrites ici aujourd'hui, un document de travail énonçant les détails précis de notre projet législatif doit être publié. Viendront ensuite le processus de consultation auprès du public et la mise au point ultérieure, à la suite de quoi j'espère pouvoir présenter un projet de loi à l'Assemblée en 1992.

The work of the advisory group is a practical exercise that will result in fundamental reform for people in need of assistance. The 12-person advisory group will provide direct advice to me through written reports and regular meetings. Their advice will relate to new legislation as well as the ministry's evaluation of the new supports to employment program.

Following the activities I have outlined, my ministry will release a discussion paper detailing our specific plans for new legislation. Following public consultation and refinements, I will present a bill to the House in 1992.

I am very pleased with the calibre of the advisory group's membership and of the expertise it brings to this important task. The other committee members are as follows:

Jacques Côté, Hearst, Ontario, justice of the peace, member of the social assistance review committee and former chief administrative officer in Hearst; Julie Davis, Toronto, secretary-treasurer for the Ontario Federation of Labour and former CUPE representative, hospitals and nursing homes; Reverend Susan Eagle, London, minister and community outreach worker for the United Church, member of ISARC, the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Committee, member of the Ontario SARC Network; Amy Go, Toronto, supervisor of immigrant services and community development at Woodgreen Community Centre, vice-president of the Chinese Canadian National Council; Cathy McPherson, Toronto, co-ordinator of education and development at ARCH, the Advocacy Resource Centre for the

Handicapped, active in the income maintenance for the handicapped co-ordinating group;

R. K. Joe Miskokomon, Muncey, Ontario, grand chief, Union of Ontario Indians, councillor for the Chippewa of Thames reserve; Lana Mitchell, North Bay, executive director of LIPI, Low Income People Involved of Nipissing, member of the Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues and vice-chair of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty; Mary Jane Mossman, Toronto, member of faculty, Osgoode Law School, consulted on new legislation in Australia and writes extensively about social assistance;

Susan Pigott, Toronto, director of communications and social action, Family Service Association of Metropolitan Toronto, chair of the Child Poverty Action Group; E. Courtney Pratt, Oakville, vice-president of human resources and strategic planning at Noranda and active member of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce; and Dick Stewart, Ottawa, executive director of program delivery for the regional social services of Ottawa-Carleton and president of the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association.

At this time, I am pleased to recognize Professor Moscovitch, chair of the advisory group on new social assistance legislation, who is seated with us in the Speaker's gallery.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY COMPENSATION FUND

Hon Mr Sorbara: I would like to provide the House with further information regarding the recent receiverships of Thomson Vacations Ontario Ltd and Odyssey International Airlines.

I am pleased to report that repatriation of stranded passengers is now nearing completion. The majority of the estimated 5,000 passengers who were caught outside of the country will have been returned by 13 May, thanks to the airlift organized in co-operation with representatives of Ontario's travel industry. I would like once again to thank the Canadian Association of Tour Operators and the Alliance of Canadian Travel Associations for their contributions in responding so quickly in helping us serve the needs of affected travellers.

Plans to help consumers receive refunds from the travel industry compensation fund as quickly as possible are now well under way. Consumers will be directed to the travel agent who made their original booking to initiate their claim. Arrangements have been made with the Royal Bank of Canada to help process the claims as quickly as possible. The objective of this quick claim process is to get money back to eligible consumers as soon and as early as possible.

Affected consumers will receive an interim payout of 75 cents per dollar of eligible amounts claimed. The balance owing will be paid to the extent possible after the end of the six-month claim period has ended and when the total amount of the claims will be known.

I am confident that when all of these measures are put into place, we will be able to process the claims and get the cheques out to consumers as quickly and as efficiently as possible.

All of this has been made possible following certain changes to the regulations for the travel industry compensation fund which were previously under review. In particular, the current payout level placed on the travel industry compensation fund for any one receivership or failure will be increased from \$1.5 million to \$5 million. In addition, provision has been made for separate emergency repatriation expenses.

These measures have the full support of the Canadian Association of Tour Operators and the Alliance of Canadian Travel Associations, and have been approved by the board of trustees of the Ontario travel industry compensation fund and confirmed

by cabinet this morning. The compensation fund was established in 1975 and provides protection for consumers through an industry-financed program. The industry makes semiannual contributions to the fund based on sales.

I should also mention that we have under review, in co-operation with the industry, the Travel Industry Act and the role of the compensation fund, and have made contact with the National Transportation Agency to review the question of airline regulations. As well, I want to stress that the government recognizes that the travel marketplace is dramatically changing. We look forward to working with the industry in developing a comprehensive response to the changes that are taking place in this connection.

RESPONSES

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr Allen: I want to respond to the Ministry of Community and Social Services' announcement of the advisory group on new social assistance legislation.

Let me say that I believe the minister is tempting me to respond in a very positive way. He has chosen an estimable group of persons to constitute this 12-person advisory group. I would almost believe that the minister was trying to recreate the days of the accord because I find a certain congeniality in perspective with respect to many of the names that I see before me. The choice is excellent and I have no doubt that he will get absolutely impeccable advice from this panel.

I have a problem with the timetable. The five steps that George Thomson recommended under the Social Assistance Review Committee's report are becoming progressively elongated.

In September 1988 there was a belated deposit of the report, the contents of which the minister at that time knew pretty thoroughly, and we could have gotten into substantial implementation fairly quickly. That did not occur for a number of months when, last October finally, announcements made the previous May were implemented in terms of the support to employment program, STEP, and then, this January, in terms of the inflation-level increases in social assistance rates. This means that we really have only half of an implementation of the very first step.

This project, for which the minister is announcing his advisory group today, addresses the bulk of the second step. That was to include the merging of the two pieces of legislation that the minister has referred to, to overcome the hodgepodge of 22 different rate categories that people could find themselves in. Indeed, somebody suggested that a single mother with two kids could, if one worked hard at it, find herself under any one of about 32 different categories. That is how chaotic the social assistance programs had become.

1400

That being the case, having to wait now until 1992 for a piece of legislation, which we note could even then be somewhat delayed given the nature of these things, is indeed a long time to wait, particularly if one is poor in this province, for those major changes that have to come by legislation.

At the same time, one would have to observe that this will leave the government in a rather unaccountable position going into the next election and that it will be able to answer all questions simply with the response: "Well, we have this in hand. We have a study group. We have an advisory community. We have a project under way." That, of course, is always un-

satisfactory for electors to respond to because it leaves things in a very woolly state.

At the same time, let me call attention to one or two of the specifics that still remain unattended to in the first stage of the Social Assistance Review Committee report. One of the major problems in getting STEP implemented and getting the income supplementation available for working people implemented is that the minister has not addressed the case-load problem. There are workers out there who simply have been so heavily burdened with case loads that I am told reliably that workers from some offices have deliberately not passed on information about STEP and they have deliberately not passed on information about income supplementation for the working poor because they cannot afford to invite a heavier case load on themselves. They do not have the time to undertake the publicity measures. So the minister and the government, in failing to respond to the massive case-load situation, are in fact impeding their own reforms and the pace at which they should be implemented.

Finally, the dependent poor, the working poor, are extremely interested in the dental program that the first stage recommended. That is one of the critical items that is so costly and difficult for persons on low incomes to cope with. Surely, the minister must be addressing those missing elements of the first stage of SARC, even as he moves in this direction.

Again, my compliments to the committee, my compliments to the minister on the choice, but I am afraid that I send my darts with respect to the timetable and some of the content.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY COMPENSATION FUND

Mr McLean: I want to comment briefly on the statement by the minister, and I hope that this will certainly relieve some of the minds of the people who have had some problems over a short period of time. I hope that the Bank of Canada will come to their aid, because obviously the minister does not appear to be giving his full attention to this matter.

When we look at two years ago, they were cut off. Nobody paid into this fund. In January, the minister knew they were in trouble. What did he do? He did not do anything, and he knew that. So I hope that this minister will complete the 75% payout and that there will be enough funds left to cover all their expenses.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mrs Marland: In responding to the statement by the Minister of Community and Social Services on the new social assistance legislation, I want to say I find it disappointing that yet another review has been set up and that the people of this province must wait another two years for social assistance to continue to move forward. While we certainly welcome the expertise of the advisory group's membership, we are afraid that this further study will be used as an excuse not to move forward with SARC.

In the budget, we were extremely disappointed that the Liberal government chose not to move forward with phase 2 of the social assistance reform. I was under the understanding that SARC was to be the end of all reviews. It is of considerable disappointment also that the government has been reluctant to proceed with SARC, which we all recognized and lauded as an excellent report.

I think it all says the same thing in terms of this Liberal government. I just want to give an example from the budget that we received last week. In referring to the Canada assistance plan, the budget statement says, "In its recent budget, Ottawa announced it was freezing Ontario's CAP entitlement at 5%

above that of 1989-90." But in the very next paragraph, after it talks about Ottawa freezing the increase at 5%, the statement of the Treasurer says, "I am announcing today that basic benefits and shelter allowances will be increased by 5% effective 1 January 1991."

Really, instead of there being a war of words, it is time this Liberal provincial government started a war on poverty. Frankly, I think playing politics with poverty is not the way that any responsible government would go.

Mr Jackson: Briefly, as relates to the announcement today of yet another review of social assistance in this province, I think it is worthy of note that the original document, which is being referenced today, made a very distinct, clear statement about the failure of rent control in Ontario. The recent public hearings on food banks in Ontario established that the number one problem facing the poor is the cost of accommodation. Clearly, having a former Minister of Community and Social Services who is now the Minister of Housing, this government has enough evidence before it that rent controls are failing under the current configuration it has dreamed up and that the universal nature of rent controls is punishing the poor in this province.

Quite frankly, today's resolution from the NDP, although it is ideologically sound for them, is inconsistent with the SARC findings, with the needs of the poor in this province and with really good government, which basically says the more you give to people who do not need it in this province, the less you have to give to those who do.

Accommodation is a critical issue. The minister's statement today does not reference the notions of affordability in housing and the challenge which that presents to the SARC reviews. I hope this government will listen to those words, to today's debate in particular, in the hope that it understands that the rising cost of accommodation is what is really hurting the poor.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY COMPENSATION FUND

Mr Jackson: Finally, I would like to commend the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and his staff for their response to the Odyssey International situation. However, I do have a constituent who is getting conflicting reports because he did not book through Thomson Vacations but through Vancouver Regency Travel. He is not being assured that he will be compensated. I would ask the minister to look into that. I am sure his staff would be pleased to do that.

ORAL QUESTIONS

RENT REVIEW

Mr B. Rae: I want to come back to some questions which I asked yesterday of the Minister of Housing. I put forward some examples of incredible rent increases as a result of the loopholes in his law on financial loss and on capital expenditure.

In the minister's answer to me yesterday, he stated, "the new regulation I introduced very recently...now requires the support of the tenant in order to make those in-suite changes." That is not how I read any of the regulations the minister has put forward. The regulations the minister has put forward do not give the tenants the right to say no to renovations they feel are unnecessary. The regulations which the minister has put forward say only that the landlord needs to give the tenants some notice of what it is he intends to do, and that if the

landlord does not give that notice, he will not be able to claim a 5% bonus, though the landlord will be able to get 100% back.

Will the minister now admit that the tenants of the province have no effective control over what is going to be done to their homes and that they are being asked to pay in one shot for renovations, many of which are entirely unnecessary?

1410

Hon Mr Sweeney: If the honourable member will check the new regulations again, he will find that in addition to requiring disclosure in order to get the 5% maintenance fee, the support of the tenant is also required for in-unit changes that the tenant wants to have or not have, as the case may be.

With respect to the one shot, the honourable member will be aware of the fact that one of the other elements of the regulation is to make a provision for the landlord to spread over several years the renovations that up to this time were often done in one year and therefore spread the economic impact over several years as well.

Mr B. Rae: Let me say to the minister that the interpretation which he is putting on the regulations is almost unique to him. One of the things we found, for example, at a rental apartment complex in the city of Toronto at 44 Dunfield Avenue and 33 Holly Street containing 326 apartments, a building bought by that well-known and warm Ontario landlord, 373041 Ontario Ltd, was that, upon purchase, the tenants were given notice of a 25% increase due to financial loss and to extraordinary operating expenses.

I would like to ask the minister how he can justify a system of rent review which allows buildings to be flipped again and again, which passes on at least part of the charge of the flip to each generation of tenants and which also asks tenants to pay for repairs, many of which are entirely unnecessary?

Hon Mr Sweeney: One of the other parts of the new regulation is to prohibit a landlord from going to rent review both for a repair or renovation increase and for a pass-through of loss if the building is sold. You cannot do it both times. That is what in fact was possible prior to this regulatory change. When we spoke to people for the tenants' association, they made it clear to us that one change alone would go a long way to eliminating the problem they anticipated and were experiencing at the present time.

Mr B. Rae: I am sure the minister would not want to give a wrong impression to the Legislature. He knows perfectly well that the federation of tenants in Metropolitan Toronto does not support what the minister has been doing and finds what the minister has been doing to be totally and utterly inadequate. I am sure he would want to confirm that simple fact before the House.

Again, I want to ask the minister if he does not realize that what has been happening in Metropolitan Toronto, Ottawa, Windsor and in many other communities is this pattern of flipping and then bringing in repairs and renovations which are extraordinarily expensive, which change the entire character of a building and which turn it into virtually luxury accommodation. This is being done at the expense of people who are looking for affordable accommodation in Ontario today. I wonder what the minister has to say to those people who are in effect rendered homeless, and certainly put out of their apartments, by virtue of the kind of pass-throughs the government is allowing to take place.

Hon Mr Sweeney: Let me share with my colleague opposite that while the tenants' association did not agree com-

pletely with the regulatory changes we made, in fact it was consulted and all of the changes that were made were those that it had proposed. They had proposed others as well, but there is nothing in that regulatory package that they did not support. They wanted more than that, admittedly.

The honourable member will be well aware of the fact that the rent review system is a balance between the wishes of tenants and the intent of the government and of Ontario society to see to it that we have a good range of accommodation. The regulation also clearly recognized that, prior to its implementation, there were a number of incentives in the system. Those incentives have been significantly decreased and, in my judgement, we will see over the next 12 months that it will have a significant impact on the situation that existed before.

ADVOCACY AND GUARDIANSHIP

Mr Reville: My question is for the Premier. He will know that today the Ontario Advocacy Coalition again called for a system of independent advocacy to protect the elderly and people with disabilities. On 11 April, I asked the Premier what his government was waiting for and he said, not surprisingly, that the matter is under review. That is no good at all to people who are being abused today and who will be abused tomorrow. When is this government going to come to the aid of people with disabilities and the elderly?

Hon Mr Peterson: I think the Attorney General can assist the honourable member.

Hon Mr Scott: As the honourable member knows, the issue of advocacy is closely associated with the issue of guardianship, which presents a number of practical difficulties. The committee that participated in the Fram study was concerned, as particularly the representatives of the Advocacy Resource Centre for the Handicapped were, that advocacy should not be left aside as we move to guardianship, a view with which—and I know I will not live to eat these words—I entirely concur. However, the project, because it involves the analysis of three important reports and probably five ministries, is presenting difficulties of resolution.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Why did you say in 1986 you were going to deal with it in a year?

Hon Mr Scott: No, no, no. Five years ago the honourable members said we would never bring in pay equity, and I said by the autumn we would do it.

I want all honourable members to know that I am committed to the guardianship and advocacy project. We are working industriously with ministries to encourage them to participate effectively so that a government policy that we can announce can be devised.

Mr Reville: The Attorney General is responsible for only half of this library of government reports. The Minister of Health, next to him, is responsible for the other half.

Of course, the library indicates that we desperately need advocacy. The Attorney General talks about practical difficulties. Let me tell him what the practical difficulties of the vulnerable are. They are two to 10 times as likely to be sexually or physically abused as the general population. They are two times more likely to be abused if they are in an institution than if they are in the community. Those are very serious practical difficulties which, quite frankly, make the Attorney General's practical difficulties a laughingstock. Why do we not have some action of some kind now, given that we started getting this library in 1987?

Hon Mr Scott: As the honourable member knows, the library which he rejects with such amusement is in fact a number of studies that were commissioned by the government to help us address what is essentially a very complex and very important exercise. As the honourable member knows well, I am fully committed to this exercise and had been long before I got into government, but it is not a simple matter.

What we have done is, we have got three reports. We have acknowledged the importance of the recommendations in the Fram report, made by ARCH and other groups, that advocacy services form a component in one way or another of the guardianship and representation determinations. That is a very important issue. We have addressed that effectively, I think, and we are working with the other ministries, the care givers, the institutional people who have major responsibilities in this field, to develop a scheme that will permit guardianship where appropriate and full advocacy where desirable, in a way that will permit these services to be carried forward.

Mr Reville: It is far too easy to be as patient as the Attorney General when it is not he who is being assaulted and abused. If he were to read again the Manson report, which describes an advocacy system that is in place, albeit under the Ministry of Health, it works quite well, lo and behold. This report makes some recommendations that, if taken together with the current system and moved into an independent system, would do the trick.

We need to shine a light into the dark corners of these institutions or, sure as shooting, people are going to continue to be pummelled and abused, as they are this very day. I find it absolutely intolerable that the Attorney General talks of practical difficulties when we are talking about people's spirit and people's bones and people's dignity.

Hon Mr Scott: After hearing that question, I have grave doubts whether the honourable member has read the library of material to which he has referred us, because, as he will know—it may be accurate—Professor Manson comments on an institutional service. Father O'Sullivan and Mr Fram and his committee were talking about the provision of these services well beyond institutional settings to domestic settings in Ontario homes. That is an important and I think appropriate consideration. Frail adults who live at home are entitled to advocacy services if they are to exist in Ontario, as well as institutional members of the public. If the honourable member truly thinks the needs of advocacy in Ontario can be achieved by simply extending Professor Manson's institutional care arrangements more broadly, he has a much narrower view of advocacy for Ontario than I have.

1420

PROTECTION OF IN-CARE RESIDENTS

Mr Brandt: My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services, when the Attorney General—

Hon Mr Scott: I am going to be famous in the advocacy field.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Brandt: I hate to remove the focus from the Attorney General.

My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. The minister is no doubt aware of the conference that was held today with respect to the Ontario Advocacy Coalition and a series of questions that were raised with the Attorney

General in connection with the number of reports and studies that have been undertaken—the Manson report, the Fram report, the Father O'Sullivan report—all of which have indicated a series of steps that should be taken by the government to provide some safeguards, particularly in institutional settings, for the most vulnerable citizens that we have in our society.

I would like to ask the minister, in light of the fact that this question has been raised as it relates to children and the question has been raised today as it relates to adults, when is his ministry prepared to make some positive move towards building in some protection for some of the citizens who, as we have heard from too many sources, are being abused physically, sexually, even monetarily, on a daily basis?

Hon Mr Beer: I am aware of the press conference that was held today and have met with representatives of those groups on this issue. I think, as the honourable member has said, it is not one that anyone can look at with any degree of satisfaction.

I would say that one of the approaches we are looking at and which the Attorney General was discussing in the series of answers just before the member's question is how we, as a government, can look at the question of advocacy and how to do that. There are within my ministry and the Ministry of Health some internal structures which deal with advocacy, or ways in which we work with groups in the community, that are themselves acting as advocates on behalf of some of the people whom the member has mentioned and who were referred to in the press release.

There are, I believe, other things that we want to look at very carefully in terms of ensuring that they are safe and secure. We have tried to move in the area of children with the review of our present procedures and I think there are a number of things that will emerge over the next while which will deal more specifically with the areas the member is addressing.

Mr Brandt: At this time we do not have standards and/or any kind of protocol with respect to acceptable types of services for residential care facilities, as the minister is well aware. Back on 5 December, the Attorney General of this province indicated quite specifically that this entire matter was, in his words, a priority of the government. Since that time there has been little, if any, action on the part of the government to provide any kind of safeguards, any kind of solution to an overwhelming problem which is surfacing literally on a daily basis in the media, where we hear of all types of abuses of citizens of all ages.

If the minister is not prepared to move on the independent advocate concept, is he prepared to move rather expeditiously, at the very least, on standards and on regulatory action with respect to residential care facilities?

Hon Mr Beer: I would certainly want to make very clear that within the institutions that fall under the purview of my ministry, we do have, I believe, very clear standards and administrative procedures and that we also have investigative procedures. We ourselves, in looking at those and in dealing with the advocacy question, are saying: "How can we improve those? Is the best route to go that of independent advocacy?" I would say that in those discussions, the Attorney General in particular has been ensuring that we look at the documents that have been brought forward around advocacy to see if that is the best route to go, but I would say that at the present time, within the institutions that we have, there are clear standards and there are clear investigative procedures. We are aware that that has not solved all of the issues, and we are going to ensure, as I say, in the short while that we are able to take a more proactive response to those.

Mr Brandt: I trust that the minister appreciates the urgency of this question, because as we are discussing this, situations that are simply not tolerable in this province are going on, as the minister well knows: stories coming from various parts of the province about institutional problems with respect to some of the residential care facilities, some which go back a long number of years, like St Joseph's in Alfred, others which are more recent. This kind of abuse requires some sort of priority of a much faster response than the Attorney General has been committed to giving in this House.

I would ask the minister if he would indicate in a somewhat more positive way a response on the part of the government to the call that I made back on 17 or 18 April, when I indicated that an inquiry was necessary into this whole area in order to determine the extent of the problems and some of the actions that would be required by government to clear up some of these problems.

The Speaker: Thank you.

✓ **Mr Brandt:** Is the minister prepared to support such an inquiry?

✓ **Hon Mr Beer:** I think we have demonstrated clearly not only our concern but that we are prepared to take action in this area of abuse. It was just the other day that I announced the appointment of Joanne Campbell to look specifically at the procedures that we have in place in terms of the whole area of child abuse of children who are in our care. We are equally concerned about the disabled and seniors who are in our different institutions and who may be suffering abuse and are looking at the best way of proceeding in terms of protecting those individuals.

I do not think that today there can be very many issues which are closer to being priority issues than these around abuse. I share completely with the honourable member that these must be dealt with. We are dealing with them in an ongoing way within our own ministry as well as with colleagues in other ministries—the Attorney General, the Minister of Health—in looking at some other different kinds of measures that we might take to protect them. But I believe that in the ongoing weeks we will be able to demonstrate action in regard to that concern.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT CORP

Mr Jackson: I have a question for the Minister of Revenue. Yesterday I asked the minister a rather straightforward and simple question. I asked him, would school boards be represented on his new Property Assessment Corp?

Based on his answer yesterday, it is clear that he does not understand fully the implications that his new Bill 156 is going to have for school boards as it relates to assessment changes in this province. Now that he has had an opportunity to consult with his staff, which is important to him, now that we have witnessed him come down and talk to the Treasurer immediately after his response, now that he has had that moment of reflection, I would like to ask the minister if he can give us a serious answer to this question: Simply, will school boards be represented on this corporation, yes or no?

1430

Hon Mr Mancini: I have never objected to receiving advice from others, especially the Treasurer's advice, which is always quite good. I may add that the honourable member should try seeking advice himself sometimes; it may help him in his political career.

I want to say to the House that the legislation, which has received first reading, that will turn the assessment division of the Ministry of Revenue into a crown corporation does in fact call for municipal representation. It calls for three—which is, I believe, half of the board—to be represented by municipalities. We do see a role for school boards and others; we have seen a role for school boards and others for a very long time within the Ministry of Revenue. As a matter of fact, the member should know, because I think he has been told, either yesterday or today, that we have an Advisory Committee on Property Assessment and Data Services within the ministry, where we do seek advice from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, from the Association of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon Mr Mancini: —and from three other organizations.

Mr Jackson: That is the issue, this minister's overreliance on advice from other members of the Privy Council. Yesterday's response to this question clearly indicated that he did not have this information about all the various groups in education who have been advising the Ministry of Revenue, and in fact he has not listened to their advice to include school board representation on this new corporation.

The minister should be aware, as the Treasurer reminded him, that 56 school boards in this province are issuing their own property tax bills, not through a municipality. Maybe this minister is now aware that the 1990 general legislative grants announced by the Minister of Education reported that 53%, more than half, of all the taxes collected in Ontario are designated solely for educational purposes.

The Speaker: And the question?

Mr Jackson: Given all that information, will the minister now admit that there is a relationship between the education community and property assessment and that they should have a role and a position on this new property assessment board?

Hon Mr Mancini: If the member will remember what I said yesterday, because his memory is sometimes somewhat lacking, I said yesterday that there were a number of organizations that in fact had concerns about assessment and had input on assessment matters. I listed some of those yesterday; I again mentioned some of them today. This advisory committee, I believe, will continue to exist, and whether or not the board of directors will be expanded to include some of these individuals as board members may in fact be decided by the board in the future or may be decided by the committee that will hear what others have to say about this particular bill during committee hearings.

Mr Jackson: Yesterday's Hansard clearly indicates that this minister said that there was only one major partner in Ontario on tax matters, and that was municipalities. This minister went on to say, what would we expect next, farmers and ratepayers? What did we want, a board of 200? That is directly from Hansard. The minister did not understand his own bill that he has before this House, and he does not understand it still to this day, if he is not prepared to allow school boards to serve on this board.

He should be aware, because he has had it since 24 April, of a press release from the Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association. They clearly call this piece of legislation bad news for school boards if they are not included on the board. Again, now that the minister has had his time to understand the

relationship, will he not publicly state that school boards, that the separate, public and francophone school trustees in this province, will have representation on this important property assessment board? He is going to be passing on taxes to the school boards from this corporation. They—

The Speaker: Order. The question has been asked.

Hon Mr Mancini: The honourable member is not listening. Yesterday, I mentioned the number of groups that could claim an interest in property tax matters. Today, I mentioned to the honourable member that for well over 10 years we have had an advisory committee that has worked with the ministry. I am assuming that this advisory committee, and other advisory committees that are in place, will continue to help the new crown corporation. Whether or not the board of directors will be expanded to include these other interest groups as full board members can be decided by the crown corporation at a future date and can also be considered by the committee when we have hearings on this matter.

MUNICIPAL ELECTION INVESTIGATION

Mr Kormos: A question to the Solicitor General: The Solicitor General knows that Tiny township has lived under a cloud of alleged corruption since its municipal election in 1988. He was reminded of that as recently as last Thursday. Police have been investigating offences under the Municipal Elections Act for over a year and a half, specifically crooked proxy voting, with no public report after all that time. This smacks of a coverup. Why has it taken so long?

Hon Mr Offer: In response to the question, I hope the honourable member is not suggesting, or in fact advising or counselling, that any politician should get involved in any police investigation. I hope that he is not suggesting that. The police are in fact conducting an investigation. It is a complicated matter. They have been involved in that investigation. I do recognize that the investigation has been ongoing for some considerable amount of time, but it is the responsibility of the police to do the most thorough and exhaustive investigation possible and, after that type of investigation is completed, to consult with local crown attorneys to determine where and when appropriate charges should be laid. That is the procedure that is followed in every particular situation; that is the procedure that is followed in this particular situation.

Mr Kormos: The council that was perhaps fraudulently elected has been in office now for almost half of its term. I tell the Solicitor General this: Leah Gignac reports that her proxy was given to her neighbours in the Rowntree Beach Ratepayers' Association so that they could vote for her. Ms Gignac further reports that her proxy was altered by one or the other of them. The neighbour that Ms Gignac speaks of is a judge of the Supreme Court of Ontario. This illegal proxy was used by his wife to cast a ballot. The involvement of a Supreme Court judge in the election corruption cries out for a speedy and open inquiry. It seems that this government has different standards for the rich and powerful than it does for the rest of us. Who is this government trying to protect?

Hon Mr Offer: The short answer to the question is that if there is any individual who has any information about any ongoing investigation, then that particular individual should share that information with the local police. That is what every individual in this province does, that is how police investigations are conducted and that is the way in which they should be conducted.

HOSPITAL BEDS

Mr Eves: I have a question of the Minister of Health. I would like to talk to the Minister of Health about the Willett Hospital in Paris, Ontario. I am sure the minister is aware that the board of governors of Willett Hospital has now been offering the money that it raised as its share of hospital renovations and the 20 new beds that her ministry promised in 1986, is offering those contributions, some \$250,000 of them, back to the contributors because it does not feel it is fair for it to keep the money, because it cannot get a commitment out of the minister's government as to when is the startup date to provide these 20 new chronic care beds and provide other hospital renovations that her ministry made a commitment for in 1986. How can that be, some four years later?

Hon Mrs Caplan: I am pleased to tell the member opposite that in fact I met with the Willett Hospital board. It was a very excellent meeting. We discussed the framework for capital planning. In fact, we talked about the fact that we are looking at ensuring that we fund as priorities innovative projects which will respond to the opportunities to shift from inpatient to outpatient and provide services in alternative ways, that we acknowledge the important initiative of long-term care reform, that we set as a priority infrastructure renewal and that we acknowledge the specialty care programs that the ministry has announced in ensuring that our capital dollars meet the needs not only for today but for the future as well.

1440

Mr Eves: I do not know what the minister's idea of a good meeting is, but I can tell the other members of the Legislature, from talking to the hospital administrator today, that the minister and the Treasurer decided to meet with the hospital after the following editorial appeared in the Brantford Expositor. I am sure the members do not want me to read the entire editorial, but I think there are a couple of comments in here I am sure they would like to hear. I quote:

"For several years now the hospital board has been identifying and justifying essential renovations. It has complied with all the ministry's regulations and requirements and recommendations. It has documented everything and has provided schedules of costs. In Toronto, officials of the Ontario Ministry of Health shuffle their papers and pursue a policy of studied neglect. Their years of inaction proclaim that they do not care about the patients at Willett Hospital. This is an absolute disgrace."

I would concur with those quotes in that editorial comment. It was shortly after that editorial appeared that the Treasurer and the Minister of Health rushed to a meeting asking—

The Speaker: Do you have a question?

Mr Eves: The question is still the same question I asked: How can it be that during the 1987 election campaign the government promised 20 new beds for this hospital and four years later is talking about doing another Ministry of Health report—

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mrs Caplan: I have had this discussion with the member opposite on a number of occasions. He knows of our commitment to ensure that we meet the needs not only for today, but for the future as well. The Premier's Council on Health Strategy made a very important recommendation, that we review our capital plan, establish a capital framework and ensure communities that we respond appropriately, using new technologies and innovations to meet those needs.

I can tell him we had a very positive meeting. I have met with a number of communities right across this province. We are implementing our capital framework in a fair, consistent and appropriate way. I think the member opposite does not know what he is talking about.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Perhaps the members would allow another member to ask a question. Are you finished?

ST REGIS AKWESASNE RESERVE

Mr Cleary: I have a question for the Solicitor General. I am sure my colleagues here are well aware of a very serious problem on the St Regis Akwesasne reserve, which straddles Ontario, Quebec and New York state. For the past two years pro- and anti-gambling Mohawk factions have been battling in a bitter dispute over the operation of six illegal casinos on the American section of the reserve. My primary concern involves safety for individuals both on and off the reserve. It grieves me to stand here today before this House and say that two individuals have now passed away. I ask the Solicitor General what the government of Ontario is doing to ensure the safety of these people.

Hon Mr Offer: I think all members in the Legislature will be aware of the serious events on the Akwesasne reserve. In that regard, I think we all recognize that particular reserve covers basically five jurisdictions, not only the province of Ontario, but that of Quebec, the state of New York, the federal government of Canada and in fact the United States of America.

We have always said, dealing with the province of Ontario, that if there were to be a request for assistance with respect to policing, we would provide that assistance. That request came last Wednesday and, as we have always indicated, we responded immediately. We responded, through OPP personnel, equipment and assistance, to ensure the safety and the security of those persons on the reserve.

I think it is important to note that, when we talk about the safety and security of those persons on the reserve, we are talking about that area for which we have jurisdiction, and that is the Ontario portion of the reserve. We also have—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon Mr Offer: If I may, Mr Speaker, for just one moment, we also have a police force on the Canadian side, the St Regis Reserve Akwesasne Police force, which has jurisdiction over both the Ontario and Quebec portions. By allowing the OPP to come on to the reserve, there have been—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Cleary: I question how the government of Ontario, along with the Quebec government, the federal government and the American government, will ensure that this most unfortunate situation expires permanently.

Hon Mr Offer: Again, the member raises an issue of concern that I think is on all of our minds. Last week I wrote to the honourable Thomas Siddon, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, expressing to him my concern about the escalating unrest and asking him to use his offices to contact Governor Cuomo of the state of New York.

I think we recognize that, in dealing with the unrest, we are talking about basically gambling casinos which are located on the American side and of course, until yesterday, no policing on the American side. That was one of the issues which was of great concern to myself. I would like to advise the member that

our native affairs directorate has requested the federal government to again use its offices to convene a meeting. That meeting, made up of members not only of the federal government, but also of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, the state of New York, the—

The Speaker: Order. This is question and response time; it is not statement time.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Would the members not waste time and allow other members to ask questions?

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Mr Charlton: I have a question for the Minister of Energy. On 2 April, in the minister's absence, I asked the Premier a question about energy efficiency and Ontario Hydro's claim that it had the most ambitious energy efficiency program of any utility in North America, a comment with which the Premier concurred. Has the minister taken a serious look at Ontario Hydro's energy efficiency proposals for the next 25 years, and more specifically for the next 10? Is she satisfied that they are adequate and competitive with other utilities in other jurisdictions on this continent?

Hon Mrs McLeod: Yes, of course I have looked, in reviewing the proposals for future electricity demand and supply from Ontario Hydro, at the component that Hydro expects to be able to achieve through its energy efficiency and energy conservation program. I am also aware of efforts that have been made and targets that have been set in other jurisdictions, and I certainly do feel that Ontario Hydro is presenting what would be recognized as being among the top jurisdictions in both target and expectations of achievement.

But I would not want to make an absolutely categorical answer to the member's question because, as he well knows, the whole question of the 25-year plan for electricity supply and demand is before an environmental assessment panel for review. One of the questions to be reviewed is the determination of need, which includes how fully can the targets for energy efficiency and conservation be met or in fact could a larger target be met.

1450

Mr Charlton: The minister's answer was somewhat as I expected. I will just repeat for her the second part of the question that I asked the Premier a month ago, hoping that she had looked into the matter further.

Central Maine Power, a small utility about one tenth the size of Ontario Hydro, in 1990 is spending twice as much relative to the size of its system as Ontario Hydro is spending this year and continuing over the next several years. They have already eliminated from their system in the last three years 200 million kilowatt-hours of energy use. That is equivalent to almost half of Hydro's projections for the entire next decade.

Will the minister take the time to understand what is happening in the electrical energy sector across this continent and ensure that Hydro's energy efficiency programs, which are continuing outside of the environmental assessment review, are updated as quickly as possible?

Hon Mrs McLeod: I would recognize, of course, that Ontario Hydro is not waiting for a determination from the Environmental Assessment Board as to whether or not its target adequately reflects what could be achieved in energy conservation and efficiency over the next years. They have in fact em-

barked on a new and very aggressive program for energy efficiency and conservation and are putting substantial amounts of money into that.

Their program as well goes along with programs undertaken by the Ministry of Energy which have been continuing for some time and which we intend to continue. We are certainly going to look at everything that is possible to do to maximize the amount that can be achieved in energy conservation and efficiency over the next years, so that not only can realistic and achievable targets be set but also that we are in fact achieving those targets.

CARE FOR THE DISABLED AND ELDERLY

Mr J. M. Johnson: My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. Last Wednesday 25 April, the minister made a commitment on behalf of his ministry, the Ministry of Health and the ministers responsible for senior citizens' affairs and the disabled, to invest \$2 billion in plans that will make major changes in both facilities and in-home services that will allow elderly people and people with disabilities to stay in their own homes as long as possible. I commend the government on this initiative.

Why does the minister not take some of that money and use it to install elevators in senior citizens' apartment buildings, so that seniors living in second-storey apartments will be able to continue to live there after they have become disabled as a result of a stroke, a heart attack or even a broken leg?

Hon Mr Beer: As the honourable member points out, we have embarked on a major initiative over the next several years to improve the whole area of long-term care for seniors and the disabled. The honourable member also points out that in a number of communities, seniors are living in multifloor accommodation, apartment buildings or old homes. That concern around the kinds of devices that could be installed to help is an important one and one that my colleague the Minister of Housing and I are discussing to see how we can help.

I would say to my honourable friend that we are still working with the major interest groups on the details of exactly what kinds of things we will be doing with the funding for the program and we will certainly take his recommendation into consideration during that time.

Mr J. M. Johnson: I would like to point out that seniors living in apartment homes which are owned by the government are in a bind because no one will provide the funding for the elevators. Without the elevators, they cannot get access if they do have an accident or a heart problem. If they cannot get into their own homes, they end up in homes for the aged or nursing homes and they will cost the government much more money.

Would it not make economic sense and be in their best interests to provide a funding base to start to install elevators in seniors' homes around the province?

Hon Mr Beer: I think the honourable member certainly makes an excellent point that if people have to move into institutional care, it is going to cost more. Everything that we can do to simplify their lives and to allow them to live in their own apartments or homes, we ought to do. I can assure the honourable member that we will look at his recommendation very closely as part of our overall program.

DISABLED PERSONS

Mr Dietsch: My question is to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons. I understand that

Canon Borden Purcell's report *Next Steps for Action*, which was submitted to the Honourable Lucien Bouchard, the former Secretary of State and minister responsible for disabled persons, recommended that a federal-provincial conference be convened during the fall of 1989. This, I presume, was to follow up at least in part on Mr Mulroney's 1984 election promise to convene a meeting of ministers responsible for disabled persons to address the many issues of concern to that community.

I would like to ask the minister if the federal government has kept this election promise and, if not, is she aware of any plans it might have to do so?

Hon Ms Collins: I want, first of all, to thank the member for St Catharines-Brock for his ongoing interest in the issues that face people with disabilities. I can tell him that the federal government has not yet fulfilled its commitment to hold the conference that he mentioned.

I can also tell the member that this government and my office have been consistent in our support for such a conference. We think it is one way of promoting some of the issues that face people with disabilities and it is also an opportunity to strategize on a national basis. We would be very supportive but, as yet, we have had a lot of talk and consultation but no action from the federal government.

Mr Dietsch: The International Decade for Disabled Persons began in 1983, as everyone knows. It was declared for the purpose of promoting full participation and integration of disabled persons in all aspects of social and political life. A national forum of federal-provincial ministers responsible for disability issues would be an important element in furthering these goals.

In view of the fact that the International Decade for Disabled Persons is quickly drawing to its end and considering the importance of integration and awareness relating to disability issues, I would like to ask the minister what she has done to encourage the organization of this long-overdue conference before 1992 and the end of the decade for disabled persons.

Hon Ms Collins: I can assure the member that I am continuing to stress to my federal counterpart the importance of such a ministerial conference on disability issues. I have written to Mr Weiner, the Secretary of State responsible for disabled persons, and I have asked him if he does intend to live up to their 1984 election promise.

But in the absence of leadership from the federal government, I can tell the member that our province hosted an advisory councils' conference last year from all parts of Canada and it was very successful. This year, on 10 and 11 May, there is going to be an advisory councils' meeting in Quebec City and, of course, our delegation will be led by Bob Loveless, the chairman of the Ontario Advisory Council for Disabled Persons.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Miss Martel: I have a question to the Minister of Labour regarding gold mining claims. On 16 March, the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal made a very important decision regarding these claims.

In the case of the worker, Mr Labine, the WCAT argued (1) that the use of the gold criteria to reject claims is improper and compensation cannot simply be denied because the injured worker does not meet the gold criteria, and (2) that when a worker does not meet the criteria, the act obliges the board to fully investigate the claim and determine compensation based on the merits of the case and using benefit of the doubt.

Compensation was awarded to the worker even though the Workers' Compensation Board had already denied him because he had not met all of the criteria. I would like to ask the minister what he plans to do to ensure that the 573 gold claims that had already been denied will in fact be reviewed by the Workers' Compensation Board in light of this decision.

Hon Mr Phillips: My understanding of the case is that the Workers' Compensation Board is reviewing the WCAT decision and will be taking action as it sees fit based on its review of that decision.

Miss Martel: I think that answer is unacceptable. I asked the minister what he plans to do.

I have a press release here, dated 14 January 1988, which reads as follows:

"Ontario Labour Minister Gregory Sorbara today announced that the Workers' Compensation Board has approved a policy of compensating gold miners who have developed job-related lung cancer. He said, 'It is the first such policy to be adopted anywhere and makes Ontario a leader in its approach to the compensation of industrial disease.'"

This government took full credit for the establishment of the gold-mining criteria. If it is good enough in 1988 to take full credit, why is it not good enough in 1990 to fix something that is not working?

Hon Mr Phillips: Again, we have a board of directors at workers' compensation that is widely representative of the community and one that I think we all look to to provide direction and advice to workers' compensation. They are, as I said before, reviewing that decision. I will await the review of that decision.

1500

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr Villeneuve: I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. The Treasurer last week announced a \$48-million interest rate relief to agriculture. Is it the minister's intention to reduce the interest rate to 8%, as was the case in the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program, and when will we have the information on that?

Hon Mr Ramsay: I welcome the inquiry about the Treasurer's announcement in the budget in regard to an interest rate reduction program. I am in the midst now of consulting with our different farm groups. As I have mentioned publicly, what I would like to do is make this payment as quickly as possible and make it retroactive on interest paid last year so that we can get money into the hands of farmers, who I know need it around this province, as soon as possible. We are looking at the criteria. I will make sure I will be working in concert with the various farm organizations.

Mr Villeneuve: When can farmers expect this? As the minister knows, many of them are paying 16%, 17% and even more in interest rates right now. They are putting in crops, and the prospect of the value of the crops they are going to be producing is not very good. When does he think he will have information for Ontario's farmers?

Hon Mr Ramsay: I would like to say to the member that I am trying to get the money out by this summer and—

Mr B. Rae: Do you want a shovel?

Hon Mr Ramsay: I will personally deliver these cheques.

As the member knows from the offer that Mr Mazankowski has made to farmers of this country, I am also trying to cut a

deal very quickly with the federal government in order to lever more money for Ontario farmers based upon the new money our Treasurer has given to Ontario farmers. Once we are able to do that, the member will be the first to know the program details.

TELEPHONE SERVICE

Mr Kozyra: My question is to the Minister of Culture and Communications. As the minister is aware, Thunder Bay has its own independent telephone company, and a very good one at that. Year after year it turns in a substantial profit. I understand there is talk about allowing competition on long-distance telephone rates. I am wondering whether the minister can tell us what the impact of these discussions and deliberations by the federal government might be on Thunder Bay.

Hon Ms Hart: I thank the member for Port Arthur, who clearly has an interest in this issue. As we understand it, CNCP is poised to bring an application to the CRTC to apply for competition in long-distance phone rates. We understand that that should happen within the next few weeks. It is the second application that CNCP has made. The member may know that at the earlier hearing CNCP was turned down, but the CRTC made it quite clear that it was not opposed, as a general thing, to competition in long-distance; it just was not satisfied with the business plan in that particular application.

Mr Kozyra: In view of these impending developments, is Ontario going to be taking a position on long-distance telephone competition?

Hon Ms Hart: We consider this to be a very important issue in Ontario. Our business community and our consumers have both a very strong interest in whether or not there will be competition in long-distance, and the telephone company in Thunder Bay will also have a very strong interest. We do hope to take a position on it, but as yet we have not seen the application so it is very difficult to say what the position will be.

It has happened in the United States, of course; there is now competition in long-distance. Through that competition, the volume of long-distance calls has increased and the rates have gone down. That is, of course, of interest to consumers in Canada since we are a pretty chatty lot, but also to our businesses because they have to compete with long-distance rates that businesses in the United States currently have. It is an issue that we will be watching very carefully. As public policymakers, we will be thinking about access—

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Wildman: We have disconnected you. You were cut off.

INTERVENOR FUNDING

Mrs Grier: I have a question to the Attorney General concerning the Intervenor Funding Project Act, 1988, an act which was proclaimed just over a year ago. In an award last month, the Environmental Assessment Board heard applications for funding by groups who want to participate in a hearing into an application by Steetley Quarry Products in the town of Flam- borough for a waste disposal site.

The board awarded \$60,000. Of that \$60,000, \$45,000 went to the two municipalities involved, Dundas and Flam- borough, and only \$15,000 went to the Greensville Against Serious Pollution citizens' group, and they were specifically precluded from hiring engineers or hydrogeologists. Would the Attorney General not agree that that kind of an award is not in keeping

with the intent of the legislation as he described it when it was introduced and in fact subverts the intent of the act?

Hon Mr Scott: I would like to take the occasion to congratulate the honourable member and others for having served five years in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario today. Her questions have consistently got better day by day, better and stronger year after year. I know she will want to pay me the same compliment with respect to my answer, which is that I will undertake to look at the decision of the board and respond to her.

As the member knows, the act is in the nature of a pilot project. One of the things we want to do is to assess the way the boards are dealing with the criteria that we in the Legislature have established. This case, of course, may be an interesting example of whether the tribunals are responding to the criteria in the way we anticipated. I would be delighted to form an opinion about it and report to her.

Mrs Grier: Let me say to the Attorney General that that certainly is a better answer than any we have ever had from him in the past. Maybe after five years he is learning also.

I appreciate his undertaking to look into the matter and I will provide him with some information. But I wonder if he could, in addition, give me some assurance that he will look into it quickly. The hearing in question opens on 14 May, and I am sure that he would agree with me that that does not give the citizens much time to hold any bake sales or lawn sales in order to finance their participation in the hearing.

Hon Mr Scott: The member for Ottawa Centre, lately displaced, always thought more highly of me than the honourable member has done, but she is not with us now. I take the honourable member's point, which was expressed as graciously as one might anticipate.

I understand the importance of the matter, but it does not seem to me that we are going to be able, in the present environment, to enact amendments to the intervenor funding legislation in the next 15 days. I will be glad to look at the act, to form an opinion about it in light of the decision that has been given by the board and report to the honourable member.

MEMBERS' ANNIVERSARIES

Mr B. Rae: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The Attorney General already referred to the fact that 2 May 1985 was a day on which a number of our colleagues on all sides of the House were elected. I am sure members will reflect on the significance of the fifth anniversary and will want to join with us in congratulating those who were elected on 2 May 1985.

The Speaker: It is not a point of order, but it is certainly a good point of information.

USE OF TIME IN QUESTION PERIOD

Mr Sterling: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Yesterday during question period there was a question to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues. Today we had two questions to ministers, or what were supposed to be questions to two ministers, the Solicitor General and the Minister for Culture and Communications.

I believe every member of this Legislature has a right to ask a question, but in these three instances I think there was some question as to whether or not they were questions. I believe the Legislature would be better served, if a minister has a long statement to make about a significant matter like what the minister for women's issues thought about the budget and women's

issues—that would be more appropriately done during ministers' statements. I would ask, when a general lob is thrown to a minister that is not in fact a question, that you consider not allowing that kind of lob.

1510

Mrs E. J. Smith: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It may be easy for someone in the opposition to make an assumption like that, but as whip, that particular question came to my office very shortly before question period and the minister did not see it until immediately before question period, so I give my word on that particular question.

The Speaker: I would just like to respond to the point. I listened very carefully and I do not feel it is the duty of the Speaker to decide the content of the question, to decide whether it is a question or not. I can recall a number of years ago here when every question had to be vetted through the Speaker's office. If the honourable member is suggesting that this happen again, I am sure he can go to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly and make that request.

RESPONSE TIME

Mr Hampton: On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: While I am aware that a question does not have to be answered by a minister of the crown, when a minister undertakes to find out what the situation is and undertakes to answer at a later date, I think he or she should do so. I asked a question in this House on 17 April on equal pay. The minister said he would get back to me and it is now two weeks later and the minister has neither given a statement nor offered an answer in this House or in any other way.

The Speaker: It is certainly not a point of privilege. If the minister said that he or she would get back to him and did not, I would suggest that maybe the member should ask again or make some other contact.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Mr Elston moved that, notwithstanding standing order 94(h), the requirement for notice be waived with respect to ballot items 49 and 50 and that, notwithstanding any previous order of the House, Mr McClelland and Mr Daigeler exchange places in the order of precedence for private members' business.

Mr Eves: On a point of order on this motion, Mr Speaker: I am not going to object to this motion, but I do want to put on the record that the three House leaders agreed at the start of this sitting that none of these times would be waived, and I can already point out the two members of the Legislative Assembly, namely the member for Riverdale and the member for Cochrane South, who have both lost their spots on the private ballot item order because of this agreement. If it is the government's position that its House leader—I do not blame the acting House leader—is now going to unilaterally change its position and start waiving these notices, fine, and it will be fair for all members, I presume.

The Speaker: I listened as a point of order but I think that is discussion on the debate, so I will ask, do any other members wish to discuss the motion? The proposer will finish. Is that okay?

Hon Mr Elston: I do not mean to trip into what has seemed to be an understanding of the House leaders prior to this date. It is my impression—in fact, it was communicated to me—that there was an understanding that this was in fact okayed by all. Perhaps I should have, on consent of the House, a chance to stand this down so that I can communicate with both the House leaders to make sure we are not violating, that there is not any kind of problem. If that is the sense, I will go and speak to them directly while this is stood down, so that I can understand very clearly what is taking place. I do not wish to undo anything that was done before. I was just advised that there had been some understanding that this was okay and that it was in fact to be passed through.

I will undertake to the House to consult, if I may, to stand it down and bring it back later so that we can in fact proceed with what is important business, private members' business. If I could do that, I would be pleased to withdraw the motion until I have a chance to—

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to the request to withdraw?

Agreed to.

PETITIONS

HOSPITAL BEDS

Mr Eves: I am pleased to table a petition to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, signed by over 900 residents of the Ajax-Pickering area, which calls once again for the original commitment to provide additional beds to the Ajax and Pickering General Hospital to be honoured. This brings the number who have signed this petition to more than 2,200 individuals.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

Mrs O'Neill: I beg leave to present a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from four of my constituents. I have affixed my signature, as required by the standing orders. The petition is:

"Wherefore the undersigned humbly pray and call upon the Legislature of the province of Ontario to pass legislation repealing the French Language Services Act, being Statutes of Ontario, 1986, chapter 45."

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr Philip from the standing committee on public accounts presented the committee's 1989 annual report and moved the adoption of its recommendations.

Mr Philip: In 1989 the standing committee on public accounts completed nine reports, six of which are contained in this particular report. This report summarizes the committee's findings on six individual inquiries and makes specific recommendations which we believe when implemented will result in efficiencies in certain ministries.

Our recommendations concerning the delivery of mental health services are part of an ongoing series of studies by our committee into the delivery of these systems in Ontario, and I know that all members of the House will be interested in our recommendations.

In addition to our study into mental health services, this report reports and makes recommendations on the committee's inquiries into government advertising and expenditures, weak controls over water and sewage treatment plants by the Ministry of the Environment, improved cost controls and resource monitoring required in forest firefighting by the Ministry of Natural Resources, improved efficiency required by the Ministry of Transportation, and also opportunities for cost reductions in the municipal roads program.

The report also outlines new procedures implemented by our committee in our very effective pursuit, I believe, of making government more efficient and promoting policies that are most likely to achieve value for money.

On motion by Mr Philip, the debate was adjourned.

1520

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mrs O'Neill from the standing committee on social development presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Bill 143, An Act to Provide for Certain Rights for Deaf Persons.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ONTARIO SKEET SHOOTING ASSOCIATION ACT, 1990

Mr Cureatz moved first reading of Bill Pr64, An Act to revive Ontario Skeet Shooting Association.

Motion agreed to.

FRAUDULENT DEBTORS ARREST REPEAL ACT, 1990

Mr Scott moved first reading of Bill 161, An Act to repeal the Fraudulent Debtors Arrest Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon Mr Scott: The helpful briefing note attached to this bill notes that it is self-explanatory.

The Speaker: Did everyone understand that?

LAW SOCIETY AMENDMENT ACT (INSURANCE), 1990

Hon Mr Scott moved first reading of Bill 164, An Act to amend the Law Society Act with respect to Insurance.

Motion agreed to.

Hon Mr Scott: Negligence insurance for lawyers is in the nature of an insurance speciality and the Law Society of Upper Canada wants to be entitled to own shares in a local insurance company to provide that insurance. That is the purpose of the bill.

Mr. B. Rae: They can have it, but drivers can't. Is that what you are saying?

Hon Mr Scott: No, drivers can.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

OPPOSITION DAY

RENT CONTROL

Mr D. S. Cooke moved opposition day motion 2:

That, as a result of the Residential Rent Regulation Act favouring landlords over tenants, the act's financial loss provisions intentionally rewarding speculative purchases, the act's capital expenditures provisions intentionally rewarding landlords for the undertaking of unnecessary renovations thus causing devastating results on the financial security of tenant families in this province, this House calls upon the government to replace the Residential Rent Regulation Act with real rent controls that will allow only one guideline based rent increase per year with no exemptions.

[Interruption]

The Speaker: Order. We are pleased to have visitors in our galleries. However, the standing orders say that there is to be no participation or any demonstration.

Just before I call on the sponsor of this resolution, I would like to remind the members of the standing order that the time this afternoon will be apportioned equally among the parties. If the member sponsoring the resolution wishes to reserve any of that one third of the time, he may, out of his party's time. The question will be put at 5:55.

Mr D. S. Cooke: It is a pleasure to be able to bring this subject before the Legislature. As most members of the Legislature will be aware, the rent control or rent review issue in this province, because of the failure of the current legislation to protect tenants across this province, is becoming a very real and a very important political issue.

The fact of the matter is that right now in Ontario, over one third of all tenants in the private sector buildings already pay more than 30% of their monthly income on rent, and the government has opted out of the non-profit and co-op housing program. What I am saying here is that the government has established its program and has now decided not to initiate any new co-op and non-profit housing, that we are losing more and more affordable housing in this province, and that the housing crisis is only getting worse because of a lack of a plan by this province.

In the private sector, the rent review legislation that currently exists is simply not protecting tenants. There are too many loopholes and landlords are taking advantage of each and every one of those loopholes. I think the question the people in this province have to ask themselves, and tenants have to ask themselves, is who represents whom in this province. It is very clear. The rent review legislation that currently exists in Ontario was designed very clearly to benefit landlords and developers in this province, and it has done that extremely well. It has not protected tenants, and during the next election the question tenants are going to have to ask themselves is who it is in their best interest to support.

Obviously, developers will again be supporting the Liberal Party of Ontario. There is no doubt about that at all. The Liberal Party has earned the support of the development industry in this province. Tenants, on the other hand, have to understand that those hundreds of thousands in donations that go to the Liberal Party during an election time are repaid by the government when it is elected in the form of weak legislation that gives

tenants the illusion that they have protection, but in reality they have no protection at all.

It was a very clever political tactic that the Liberals used in the last election. They brought in this new rent review legislation and tenants did not experience the effects of that rent review legislation until after the 1987 election. The Liberal Party received a lot of support from tenants in the 1987 election. It is now clear that tenants understand how the Liberal rent review legislation works. They not only do not deserve the support of tenants across this province; I am convinced they will not receive the support of tenants in this province in the next election.

I was at a tenants' rally sponsored by one of the members of Toronto city council a couple of weeks ago. The member for Eglinton was there and she said it was only 15% of the tenants who are affected by the loopholes in rent review. It may only be 15% this year, and then 15% next year and 15% after. The reality is hundreds of thousands of tenants have been affected by the weakness of this legislation. We have been bringing a lot of these cases to the attention of the Minister of Housing.

As of 31 March 1990, 323,000 tenant families in Ontario have been hit by rent increases above the government's guideline. I am going to read through a few examples: 44 Dunfield Avenue, 25%; 4918 Bathurst Street in North York, 29%; 147 and 175 Barrington Avenue in East York, 29%; 161 and 163 Gilmour in Ottawa, 189%—that was the case I raised where the landlord asked for a 101% or 102% increase, went to rent review and got 189%; not bad.

I am sure workers in this province would like to be able to go to their employer when they are negotiating their wage package and ask for 6% or 7% and the employer would come back to them and say, "No, I insist that we give you 20%." I am sure workers would appreciate that kind of intervention from their employers.

Tenants at 100 Gamble Avenue in East York, 23%; 150 Cosburn in East York, 27%. The list goes on and on. As I said, as of 31 March of this year, 323,000 tenant families have had rent increases above the guideline, and many of those increases are very substantially above the guideline.

Why is this happening if we have rent legislation that is supposed to protect tenants? It is because the loopholes that exist are so huge that landlords are taking advantage of them at every turn. We have raised case after case of unnecessary renovations that are being introduced by landlords for one purpose and one purpose only. That is because they want to raise the rent, which then raises the value of the building and then of course results in the building being sold. Then the new owner gets to bring in additional costs for refinancing and of course the tenants pay for that as well.

1530

We even have, on the refinancing—and this was raised in the House in the past—this group of consultants who go and talk to developers and landlords and tell them how they can take advantage of the rent review legislation. One of the seminars they had was: "How to sell more apartment buildings under rent controls. What we will teach you: We will teach you how to sell rental property using the system. Here is what you will learn: How and why the new legislation contributes to apartment flips." Consultants are out there making money teaching landlords and developers how to take advantage of this legislation to screw tenants. That is what it boils down to.

We have a very limited amount of affordable housing in this province. Part of the deal that was supposed to be arranged by

the Liberal rent review legislation was that, on one hand, tenants were going to be protected and, on the other hand, the balance was that the development industry supported the legislation and therefore it would get back into the market of building rental housing. There is no private sector rental housing being built in this province with this rent review legislation and there never will be. There is no rental housing being built in British Columbia, where there is no rent control. The fact of the matter is, developers are going to invest their money in luxury condominiums and in commercial properties because that is where they can make big, big bucks. They are not going to be putting it into rental properties.

So what we have is the worst of both worlds. We have a rent review system that does not protect tenants, and we have no private sector rental properties being built, and the government now has completed its co-op and non-profit housing programs. No new non-profit and co-op housing program will be initiated by this government, so the housing crisis is going to get worse and worse for middle- and low-income families across this province.

Our solution is very clear. What we are saying is that the government has to initiate a new co-op and non-profit housing program. There is simply no question about that. In Toronto, we know there are between 10,000 and 20,000 people who are completely homeless; we know there are hundreds of thousands of people across this province who are doubling up in apartment units, living with relatives and friends because they cannot find affordable housing and we know that the waiting list for assisted housing in this province is growing daily. Tens upon thousands of people are waiting to get affordable housing in this province. We know there are seniors and families who are paying 60% and 70% of their monthly incomes on rent because we do not have adequate affordable housing. So there is simply no question.

It really irks me and bothers me when I hear the Minister of Housing get up and say: "What do you want us to do? We've built more non-profit and co-op housing than any other province in this country." Big deal. Prince Edward Island has 200,000 people; Saskatchewan has 900,000; this is the biggest province with the biggest problem and we would expect this government to be having the biggest non-profit and co-op housing program.

But he cannot stop it here. He cannot leave the people who are out there now living in inadequate accommodation or living in the streets and say: "We can't afford any more. One and a half per cent of our provincial budget is all we're going to spend on assisted housing." That is simply unacceptable. If the minister does not think he has a political responsibility to provide that kind of housing, he sure in God's name has a moral responsibility to provide that kind of housing in this province and not allow people to be living in slums and on the streets in this province when there is a desperate housing shortage.

The other part of the solution—and they cannot be separate; this was part of the problem the former Minister of Housing had. She thought that perhaps a co-op and non-profit program would be adequate and then leave this rent review legislation to let the landlords raise rents higher and higher. It has to be a total program. That means we have to protect the rental housing that exists there now. That only means we have to scrap the current rent review legislation, because it cannot be fixed.

The minister can bring in a regulation today to plug one loophole, and the regulations that he has brought in at this point are inadequate. Notice to tenants with no right of veto for tenants simply will not solve the problem. He cannot bring in

regulations to solve one loophole and then discover another loophole and then discover another loophole.

I raised with the minister the case of the Sorbara buildings where we found another loophole, where the land and the buildings are owned by different companies—same owners. They raised the rent for the land by 1,300% and it will be passed through. That is another loophole that will be taken advantage of and there are all sorts of buildings in exactly the same situation across Metropolitan Toronto. Insurance companies have invested in a lot of buildings in exactly the same way, so there is another loophole. The refinancing is another loophole.

The minister said a couple of weeks ago that deliberate neglect of buildings and then massive amounts of investment in the building to correct that neglect will not be allowed; that there are provisions in the current rent review legislation to disallow those kinds of expenditures if there is deliberate neglect involved. What he forgot to tell the Legislature was that if there is an apartment flip in between, if there are 17 years of neglect and then a sale of the building, the new owner is not responsible for that 17 years of neglect. That is what is happening, so that section of his rent review legislation is completely unenforceable because the buildings are being flipped.

The other part of the solution has to be a speculation tax. We have to say to the investors and owners of buildings in this province, "We are not going to allow you to make that kind of money on the backs of people who need affordable housing in this province." There is no problem with making a fair and respectable profit in this province, but it is not appropriate to simply invest in a building when the market is hot and take advantage of hundreds of thousands of dollars—in some cases millions of dollars—of increased value at the expense of tenants on a basic right of housing.

The minister is going to have to come to grips with the fact that the only way of discouraging speculation is with a speculation tax. The Treasurer has said in the past that a speculation tax does not work, and his definition of "not working" was that the tax did not bring in any money. Our definition of a successful speculation tax is that it will not bring in any money because it will stop the speculation. That is the purpose of the tax. It is not a revenue-raiser, it is a tax that is designed to protect people in our communities in the residential housing field.

There will be other members of my caucus who will be contributing during this debate, but I think there is one thing that has to be made very clear. The record of the Liberal Party and the Liberal government on housing, and in particular of protecting private sector tenants in this province, is dismal. It should be embarrassing to the current government.

We are losing very rapidly what affordable housing we have left in the private sector. The government refuses to act. There will be an election soon. It may be fine for the member for St Andrew-St Patrick and the member for Eglinton and some of the other Liberal members who like to go back to their home ridings and say what a good job they are doing fighting for tenants and that they agree with the tenants' movement. The reality is they are Liberals and the Liberal government has refused to act to protect tenants.

Tenants will have only one alternative in the next election. They will have the Liberals, who get headlines by saying they are going to protect tenants and providing phoney legislation, and they will have the Conservatives, who say, as the member for Nipissing has said, "Scrap rent review," or as the member for London North has said, "Scrap it in 20 years," and they will have the New Democratic Party, which is not beholden to the development industry or landlords in this province. We do not

take donations from those interest groups in this province. We are obliged to protect the housing stock and to protect the ordinary people of this province—the tenants of this province.

Mr Speaker, I commit to you and, through you, to the tenants of this province that is what we will do, whether it is minority government or whether it is an NDP majority government after the next election. This legislation cannot be allowed to stand and we will continue to fight for changes so that there is protection for the tenants and affordable housing in this province.

1540

Hon Mr Sweeney: I want to take part in this debate because I think it is appropriate that we talk about these issues. I want, quite frankly, to thank my honourable critic and colleague for introducing this opposition day motion, because it does give us an opportunity to put some facts on the record. I am a little bit concerned that my honourable critic has spoken about generalities, about the sort of devastating things that are going to happen. Let me take a short time to put some facts on the record.

First of all, let us remember where the existing legislation came from. Let us remember—and give credit where it is due—that a change and a rewriting and a redrafting of the then existing rent review legislation was part of the accord between the New Democratic Party and the Liberals back in 1985 and 1986.

It was clearly recognized at that point in time that there were some serious flaws in a piece of legislation that had been in existence, I believe, for approximately 10 years. It was originally introduced in 1975. But the other decision that was made was that, instead of the government by itself redrafting that legislation, we ought to bring on side the two parties who were most directly affected by it, the tenants, who had to live in the rental units and who had to pay the rents, and the landlords, who were responsible for providing and maintaining those facilities.

So therefore we were quite happy, as part of that accord agreement, to review, restructure and redraft the rent review legislation in the province. We were quite happy, as part of the accord, to be sure that a tenants' representation and a landlords' representation were part, and a very significant part, of that review.

As a matter of fact, my recollection was there was a committee of nine landlords and nine tenants which spent four months going over the existing legislation and making a very significant series of recommendations. I remember our getting reports about how difficult these nine tenants and nine landlords found this particular task, because one of the opportunities they had available to them, in sitting across from one another, was to clearly understand much more clearly where the other person was coming from, what the responsibilities of the other person were and what the financial limitations on the other person were.

As a result of that rather difficult activity, we did come up with a new piece of legislation late in 1986. That is essentially what we have right now. So let us not forget the origins of what we are now saying is completely useless and supposedly does not work, now that we know where it came from.

I want to remind my honourable colleagues of some of the significant—and I want to emphasize that—some of the significant changes, not all of them, but some of them, that came out of that particular activity.

First, all of the buildings which had been constructed after 1975, which were not covered by the then legislation, were now

covered. I want to tell you, Mr Speaker, that the tenant representatives on the committee felt very strongly about that and won the day on that one. So, therefore, literally overnight a very large number of buildings not covered under rent review at all were now covered under rent review. I would suggest to my honourable colleague, and I think he would probably agree, that was an important change and an important advance.

The second one is that under the old legislation it was possible for a rent increase to take place more than once during any given year. That was changed under the new legislation; it was made very clear that there could be one only increase during any 12-month period. That was something the tenants very much wanted and that is something they got.

The third element in there was that the tenants were concerned about the general maintenance of the building and that, in fact, there could be a municipal standard request to maintain the building. It was not done and nothing happened. Therefore they said, "As part of this new legislation, or redrafting it, we need some mechanism inside."

I do not know where the name Residential Rental Standards Board came from, but that was essentially what that was. That became part of the new legislation which permitted, within the rent review operation, a board that would examine maintenance orders that had not been completed as they ought to have been, and then direct the rent review officer in the various municipalities to withhold any rent increases until that work is done. In fact, that board is operating and that is exactly what happens at the present time.

Another element the tenants brought to our attention was that roomers, boarders and lodgers were not at that time covered by the existing legislation; they were covered by this new legislation. That was another significant advance for many thousands of people in this province. I recall that during that debate my honourable friends in the New Democratic Party indicated that this was a very important advance in that we put under the rent review legislation a very large number of people.

Finally, and as I say this is a relatively short list, one of the concerns which the tenants brought to our attention was the existence of key money in its various and nefarious forms. There was no protection for tenants when in fact key money was being requested and sometimes literally ordered. Under the new legislation, that was outlawed. I am not suggesting that it may not occur at any one time at the present time, but I think my honourable colleague will agree with me that it went a long way to just about eliminate that practice.

The point I want to make is that we remember where this legislation came from; who were the people in this province who helped to put it together; what kind of balance and, yes, what kind of compromises were accepted by both sides in order to get a piece of legislation that they could both work with, and what were some of the very important and significant advances that were made as a result of that. I think we have to keep that clearly in mind.

Now, what about the operation of it? One aspect of the operation that the government has been rather severely criticized for—and I say rightly so—is the backlog. But let us again remember, the immediate cause of that backlog was the addition of all of those buildings that were constructed after 1975. Literally overnight, there were about another 18,000 applications that had to be dealt with.

As a matter of fact, I would remind my friends that in the summer of 1988 that backlog constituted some 25,000 units. Today, less than two years later, we are down to a backlog of 4,000. I would say we have gone a long way to deal with that

particular operational difficulty. We have done it at great cost; the cost of operating the rent review system in this province now is about \$40 million. That is a lot of money. It is a legitimate expense, but I think the tenants of this province would recognize that it is an expense that we should entertain and that, to protect them, it is an expense we should accept.

The other point in terms of the operation, I would remind my friends, is that the administrative structure under the old system was considered by tenant organizations to be very judicial. One had to almost—at the very first stage, that is—have hearings. In many cases tenants felt they had to have a lawyer. They did not have the necessary information to properly defend themselves or to deal with the issue, and they said: “Look. We want a simpler administrative process. At the first stage, we ought not to have a hearing, we ought to have simply a review officer, who would take all of the information in from the landlord, would make sure that the tenants knew what that information was, would make sure that the tenants who requested it understood the implications of that information and then would make the initial hearing.”

1550

We have done that over the last four years. We now have a much simpler administrative procedure.

Of course, the second step is the hearing itself. If a tenant or a landlord is not satisfied with the decision at the first stage, he can request the appeal and then we do have a hearing, as we used to have in the first stage before. But I want to remind my friends that the request clearly was to make that kind of administrative change.

There has been a fair bit said about the massive number of very high increases across the province. Again, let's deal with the facts. The facts are that in the past 12-month period and in previous 12-month periods, 83% of all rental units in this province did not have to go to rent review. The translation is that they got a rent increase of 4.6%, maybe less in some cases, but not more, because everyone is quite well aware of the fact that if an increase greater than 4.6% is requested, then it must go to rent review. So 83% of the rental units in this province and the people who live in those rental units did not get an increase in excess of 4.6%.

By the way, the record clearly shows that for the previous three 12-month sessions, the figures were almost identical. They fluctuated by 1% or 2%, but they were very, very close.

Mr D. S. Cooke: That means over half the units over the last three years have gone over the guideline.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Hon Mr Sweeney: Not necessarily at all, I say to my honourable colleague—not necessarily at all.

Let's look at the 17% who in fact did go above the guideline, who went to rent review either at the first stage or at the first and second stages. The average increase for the last 12 months was 10.8%. True, it is higher than the 4.6%, but it does not match the exorbitant increases which my honourable colleague read out as examples of what is going on generally.

I am not disputing for a minute the particular examples that my honourable colleague gave. I assume that they are correct. I do not have the data to confirm or contradict him, so I will assume that they are correct. But let's not draw from that the conclusion that this is the general rule. It is not. The general rule is that 83% of the people in this province in rental quarters do not get an increase above the guideline. The general rule is that the 17% who do go to rent review get an average in-

crease—and we all know what average means, some are more and some are less—of 10.8%.

The other point to keep in mind is that we get a considerable amount of discussion about the impact of financial loss and the impact of repairs and renovations. Of that 10.8% average increase, above the guideline, or those who go above the guideline, 2.5% represents financial loss and 2.5% represents repairs and renovations. Again, that is an average.

I am not disagreeing that there are some individual cases, and I think that both my colleague and I would agree that there are probably too many, but, again, let's keep the figures straight. Let's not suggest that this is what is happening everywhere to everyone; it simply is not. That is fact. I do not make those up. The records clearly show that information.

Mr D. S. Cooke: So what is the law there for? You wait till everybody does it and then you change the law?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Hon Mr Sweeney: Let's look at the question of financial loss that my honourable colleague talked about. I would remind him that this particular aspect of the legislation has been in it since 1975, right at the very beginning; it was an initial component. It was changed in 1982, because in the initial legislation, as my colleague well knows, there was no limit, on an annual basis, as to what it should be. We had a very serious incident at that time, what is commonly referred to as the Cadillac flips, and I cannot recall, but I suspect fairly strongly, unless my colleague tells me otherwise, that there was probably general agreement in this House that the government of the day reduce that to no more than 5% a year. I think everyone saw that at that time as a good thing to do.

When the legislation was being redrafted in 1986, and I will candidly admit this, there was not agreement all the way around that it should be left that way, but there could not be agreement among the nine tenants' and nine landlord representatives of a better way of doing it. Again I would stand corrected, but I do not recall that during the debate of the 1986 legislation anyone else around here had a better idea of how to handle that situation.

Again, I am not suggesting that it is perfect. This legislation is not perfect; no one is suggesting that. It is the best compromise we can get to maintain a good supply of rental housing in this province and at the same time protect the majority of tenants in this province from high increases.

Let me talk about capital expenditures; my colleague mentioned that. He will well know that the reason why there is a provision within the rent review legislation for a pass-through of costs for capital expenditures, repairs and renovations is to maintain the stock. One of the standard rules—and as a matter of fact I have often heard my colleague use it with respect to employment. I have often heard him say, “It's just as important that we protect an existing job as to create a new job.”

That is a valid observation. I simply want to ask him to accept the same premise when I say it is just as important to protect an existing rental unit in good repair as it is to create a new one. We would like to create some more new ones, and in fact I will speak about that briefly, but it is just as important.

I want to remind my honourable colleague that we did, just in the last week or so, introduce a new regulation that did a number of things, and I have talked about them before. It eliminates any financial advantage for the fix-and-flip. They get credit only once, they do not get it twice. It required disclosure, and there is a financial penalty if it is not given. It requires in-suit support of the tenant, and there is a financial penalty.

I noticed earlier that the leader of the New Democratic Party indicated that he had not heard of that before. Let me just read the release that clearly indicates that. This was the release on the day that the regulations were put out. It says:

"In cases which involve replacing items within a tenant's unit, such as appliances, cupboards, tiles or bathroom fixtures, the landlord must also obtain written agreement from the tenant. The landlord will lose a 5% allowance in rent review if the agreement is not obtained."

Mr D. S. Cooke: Yes, that's exactly what it said.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Hon Mr Sweeney: It clearly says that, so I have a little bit of difficulty understanding what the honourable leader of the party meant when he said I was the only one who understood that interpretation. I do not think it could be any clearer. That is precisely what we had in mind, and as a matter of fact it was one of the things we discussed.

Mr D. S. Cooke: You said it would stop them from doing it. It doesn't give them the right to veto.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please, the member for Windsor-Riverside.

Hon Mr Sweeney: The other part of the regulation is that it is now possible, and there is an incentive to do so, to spread repairs out over two, three, four years rather than lump them all in one year, and it is now required that a number of amortization periods are spread out as well, which in all cases will reduce the financial impact.

We are convinced that, as a result of these regulations, there is going to be a noticeable financial reduction, and we have clearly indicated, and I did when I released the regulations, that we would monitor it for a 12-month period. I have told everybody—I have told the tenants' association, I have told the landlords' association—that if in fact it does not produce the results that we believe it ought to, then we are prepared to come back and strengthen those, either strengthen the regulations or change the legislation itself.

1600

Let me clearly speak to the main purpose of this particular motion, and that is to change rent review to rent control. I can only suggest to my honourable colleague that if we were to do that, it could be described in only one word, and that would be "disaster." Let's be sure we understand the difference. Rent control means that a single guideline number is assessed each year and there cannot be any increase beyond that.

Hon Mr Elston: Next they'll be advocating wage controls.

The Speaker: Order, please.

Hon Mr Sweeney: I would only ask my honourable colleague, what do we do when several hundreds of thousands of dollars need to be spent to replace a roof, to repair an elevator, to replace railings on balconies that have been ordered by the municipality, to repair the garage that is collapsing because of concrete deterioration, to replace the rugs in the halls that have become very soiled and very worn? My honourable colleague knows what would happen. Those things simply would not get done.

How do we know? Because we simply look at other jurisdictions that have a rent control system now. That is how we know. We are not making these up. I would invite my honourable colleague to visit those jurisdictions, as people from my ministry have visited them and have come back and told a

litany of horror stories, the streets of buildings that are boarded up.

Let's also keep in mind that in order to deal in this thing, there has to be investment money available. That investment money will dry up. They simply do not work.

But there is another effect that I am reasonably sure my colleague has not thought of, and that is that the guideline figure would, of necessity, in order to cover at least some of those other things, have to be higher than the one we have now. I do not know what it would be. For the last two years the guideline figure has been 4.6%. I would suggest to my colleague that if we are going to have a single guideline figure and nothing beyond it, then we would be looking at 8%, 9% or 10%. I do not know what the figure would be, but it would be higher. I suspect that it would be at least twice as high.

What is the implication of that? The 83% of people in this province who have paid the guideline or less would now have imposed on them, with his suggestion, twice as much of an increase. I think my honourable colleague has got to consider that very, very distinct possibility.

We know it could not be the same guideline we have now, because the guideline we have now does not factor in those other maintenance pass-through costs. It does not factor them in because there is a provision within rent review to deal with them in another way. If there were no provision to deal with them in another way, they would have to be factored into the guideline. I believe my colleague knows that. Therefore, what he would say is that 83% of the people in this province would end up paying higher rent increases as a result of his proposal.

The honourable member indicated that we would have to do other things, and I agree that we have to do other things. In fact, we have done other things outside of rent review. We have been told by tenants in this city, mainly in this city, that one of the best things this government has done—one of the best, not the only thing—is bring in our rental housing protection legislation. We knew before that legislation was brought in that rental apartments were being converted to condominiums, that rental apartments were being converted into suite hotels. We knew those kinds of things. This legislation prohibits that.

Mr Philip: They still are. You broke your promise.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Hon Mr Sweeney: As my honourable colleague the member for Etobicoke well knows, any piece of legislation which this Legislature passes is not an absolute guarantee that somebody will not break the law. We know that. We know people speed, we know there are people who rob banks, we know people who break the law, but the fact remains that now, under the Rental Housing Protection Act, those kinds of things will not happen. We have been told over and over again of the very positive impact of that legislation.

My honourable colleague said that we need to produce more units to add to the total stock. We have done that. In the four and a half years that this government has been in power, we have added 60,000 units. We have another 30,000 in the works right at the present time. My colleague says, "You've got to start a new program." Well, that 30,000 is still ongoing and will continue to go on for another two years. I agree with him. We are going to have to start a new program, and we will, but let me remind him that of those 30,000 units, as of last year, just about 3,500 had actually started. There are going to be 17,000 started this year. There will be another 6,000 at least started next year, and more beyond that. We are very much conscious of that.

Therefore, let me just simply say that the legislation we have is not perfect, but it is far, far better than my honourable friend's alternative.

Mr Philip: New Democrats have asked for this debate on the crisis in rental accommodation because there is a crisis in Ontario. The present crisis faced by many tenants in this province was predictable when the present legislation was introduced. Tenants are in their present situation because of a series of broken promises by the Liberal government.

Among the promises in the accord, which the minister earlier referred to, were that the rent review guideline would be maintained at 4%; that the rent review system would be made more streamlined so that rents could be set in advance rather than one or two years later, as often happened under the previous system; that legislation would be brought in to control the loss of rental housing through demolition or luxury renovation, and we know that that has not happened in the majority of cases; and perhaps most important, that the government pledged to address the serious shortage of affordable housing. None of those promises signed by the Liberals in the accord has been kept.

In introducing the present inadequate legislation, which we, as New Democrats, voted against, the then Minister of Housing said that, "This legislation will do three things: It provides the tenants of Ontario with a real and universal protection from unfair rent increases." We know that that was simply not true. "It provides," the minister said, "a revitalization of rental housing construction in this province." We know that that is not true. There has not been new rental housing construction. The minister said that it would create a system of rent review that is fair and equitable to all. It obviously is not fair and equitable to all or we would not have so many tenants in the gallery today demonstrating against this government's housing policy.

The booby-prize award for statements made on this legislation has to go to the Liberal member for Brampton South, who stated: "I have read this bill and its explanation. In the real world, this bill has gone a long way towards eliminating a lot of the mumbo-jumbo and bureaucracy that is involved."

Well, any of us who have tried to assist tenants before their present rent review system know that the minister has created a huge bureaucracy, a bureaucracy far worse than what was in existence before.

The Conservative critic, Mr Gordon at the time, praised the legislation by stating in the House on 3 July 1986: "In commenting on the bill, I have to say that all measures in it appear to be progressive. Because of the changing nature of the needs of Ontarians, the changing demographics and the changing economic factors, they seem like fair measures for the day."

That was the position of the Conservative Party at that time. The Conservatives voted with the Liberals to pass this legislation. Now, of course, the member for Nipissing, a leading contender for the Conservative leadership, says that he would vote against rent review entirely, abolish it entirely. That is his solution to the present crisis.

We voted against the present legislation because we argued that it was excessively cumbersome and bureaucratic and because it had so many loopholes in it that it would still allow for major increases. We see now that the loopholes on financial loss and capital expenditures will allow for major increases. We have seen some of these increases. The Liberal government in this province can legislate in the Condominium Act to require capital reserve funds to protect individual condominium owners from major increases in any given year, and yet it cannot legis-

late any kind of reserve requirement on landlords to ensure that tenants do not get major increases in a year.

1610

New Democrats introduced amendments to the Corporations Act that would have stopped and reduced the likelihood of flips and the pass-through of refinancing costs to tenants, which many tenants are facing in this province. The Liberals and Conservatives voted against it. We called for a speculation tax to take away the incentives of people flipping buildings and making major capital profits at the cost of tenants. The Liberals and Conservatives have rejected these kinds of proposals.

At the present time, I am making written submissions on behalf of tenants in some eight or nine projects in Rexdale. Many of those are projects in which the landlord has allowed the accommodation and the appliances to deteriorate over a period of years, and now the tenants are facing 25% to 50% rent increases as a result of capital expenditures or improvements which they have not asked for and which clearly, by the regulations this government has introduced, they will still get whether they like it or not.

Over 50% of the rental units in my riding are registered as condominiums even though they have been operated as rental units for as long as 11 or 12 years. In the last real estate market boom, many of these tenants faced eviction as their units were sold from under them. I pointed out to the then Minister of Housing, the member for Oakwood, on 7 January 1988, that a majority of the rental buildings constructed since 1975 were registered as condominiums and that the tenants were not protected. She promised legislation to protect those people. When she introduced her antidemolition legislation she broke that promise. Those tenants are not protected and they in fact are in the process of being evicted.

In conclusion, let me say this: It is time to replace the present unworkable system with real rent controls that will allow only one guideline-based rent increase per year with no exemptions. It is time to have a speculation tax to take away the incentive for speculation. It is time that the \$40 million which is spent on this bureaucratic rent review system, which the Liberals and the Conservatives voted for in this House and which we in the New Democratic Party predicted would not work and voted against, be replaced. It is time for the Liberals to stop keeping their private promises to the corporate landlords and keep the public promises which they have made to tenants.

Mr Jackson: I am very delighted to participate in this debate. Members of the House know that, from a personal point of view, I have a lot of interest in matters dealing with rent review, not just having been a former housing critic for my party, but also because I participated in the public hearings on this infamous Bill 51 and because I participated in what I thought was a good process of public inquiry and discussion to come to the conclusion of having filed that report to help look at the regulations. I could not in all conscience support this legislation, so many of my comments today are from my personal perspective as someone who voted against rent control and lived to talk about it.

I share that unique distinction with a member of the New Democratic Party, probably a most outstanding social democrat of the decade, Morton Shulman, who served in this House in a seat in downtown Toronto. Both Morton Shulman and I stood in our place in this chamber on two separate occasions to indicate what we considered was an inappropriate approach to meeting the needs of tenants and society's need to ensure that all of our

citizens have decent and affordable accommodation based on their needs.

Unfortunately, this debate has already shown elements of the political acrimony that we have become famous for in this House. It is unfortunate that a matter as serious as this has to be put in purely political terms and we have to focus almost entirely on the past. I am going to try to set out what I believe are my concerns for the homeless in this province and the affordability problem in our province.

I will be fair to the new Minister of Housing, who I believe is an honest, decent and very hard-working member of the Privy Council and who, I must admit, has given me the most straightforward answers to the questions around rent control. We must understand that two previous ministers have surrendered their seats in the Privy Council, generally because of the Housing portfolio and specifically because of problems related to rent control. Given the unfortunate demise that has occurred to those two individuals, I believe the present minister has at least learned the first appropriate lesson—he did apply it in his previous portfolio—and that is to speak squarely and fairly about the reality of what he is faced with.

He is on record in this House as admitting that he has a very difficult problem to handle. He has admitted that he has a backlog which he is having difficulty with, although it is an improved backlog over his predecessors. He has admitted that he has run out of money; on one occasion he has admitted to me in this House that there are insufficient funds from the Treasurer to implement fully all the regulations and all the sections of Bill 51. The public does not realize that there are some sections of this bill that still have not been proclaimed, and it is almost three and a half years old.

In his previous portfolio, as the Minister of Community and Social Services, he recognized the need for reform in this province for those people who have difficulty affording to live in this province. It is not just confined to the city of Toronto; this is a concern, and a crisis, that is affecting virtually every city in this province.

He has recognized, as the Social Assistance Review Committee report indicated, that there are intrinsic failures to the rent control system that we are operating in this province. The SARC report made that very clear statement, that the universal nature of rent control does not serve the poor of this province and does not assure accommodation with dignity and affordability. He has admitted that there are some elements in the SARC report that must be addressed.

My colleague the member for Hamilton West has caused this assembly to deal with the issue of food banks. Again, during those public hearings virtually every social service agency, every food bank, every volunteer group dealing with the struggle of the poor to exist in our communities, to live properly in our communities, stated that the number one concern was affordability, that the rising cost of shelter was what was causing the largest single increase in our food banks.

Faced with those observations, faced with the clear need to change our welfare system to address affordability, faced with the reality that rent control is not working, which the NDP is openly admitting—and that is the tone and tenor of their recommendation, that the system as envisaged, known as Bill 51, just is not working—there are other groups in society which have also indicated that this concept of rent controls is not working. When I say the “concept of rent controls,” I am saying the concept of the universal application of rent control.

I believe that a system of rent control which I would support would be to abolish the current system and replace it with a

form of regulation and a form of shelter subsidy. I have come to that conclusion partially because of my work as a housing authority chairman a decade ago, when we had to deal with increasing access and affordability, and partially because I have come to the conclusion that there are a growing number of citizens in this province who cannot afford 30% increases year after year, as is the case of a building on Lakeshore Road in my former riding, which is now the riding of Oakville South; some 68% in three years for some of the senior citizens in that building.

The problem is that we should not be putting rent controls on bricks and mortar. Each building is different: it ages differently, it depreciates differently. The NDP has already indicated the problems with trying to schedule these elements for cost recovery. But rather, we should be looking at the tenant's need, the individual's need, his lifestyle need and his need to live in a part of a community that is convenient for shopping, that is close to other family members. Those should be the reasons why a person finds accommodation in this province and why he is allowed to stay in his own accommodation, not because rent control is on buildings. But we cannot fundamentally make that leap here in Ontario.

1620

What is interesting is that they have made that leap in a lot of jurisdictions in this country, in North America and throughout Europe. In fact, we are one of the few jurisdictions in the world that has allowed rent control to go on beyond its 15th year. Provincially, if you look at all the provinces, there is only one other province in Canada that in the past four years has moved to further ratchet down and control something which quite frankly is uncontrollable, and that is Newfoundland. Every other province has recognized the important agenda of ensuring and guaranteeing affordability.

I have a few points that I am concerned about and that I want to focus on in a more direct way. One is the cost of rent control. One of the main reasons that I voted against this rent control legislation was because the cost of administering this system, the bureaucracy of rent control, has risen in what we heard today is the fifth-year anniversary of this government. In five years the cost of rent control has gone up by almost 450% in this province. When the Conservatives left office in 1985 it was costing around \$7.8 million to administer this system of rent control; it is now close to \$50 million.

I say that because when I was doing the estimates for the Ministry of Housing, not too terribly long ago, we found out that there had been some creative accounting to off some of these costs of rent control administration into other departments, and the government has the right to do that. The minister, to his credit, has already indicated to this House that he is running out of money to apply to this bureaucracy. But I propose to members what \$50 million would do to help bridge the gap between current rents in this province and the affordability crisis that many citizens in our province are faced with. There is a myth that the government can provide all the housing. Every socialist country in Europe has found out that it cannot provide all the housing that is required. There has to be a partnership. There is a role for government and there is a role for the private sector, and yes, there is a role for the individual tenant.

There is not a role for a tenant who is making a really healthy income, and I am talking about people making \$100,000 or \$150,000 a year. Why do they need a 6% cap on their rent? Why do they need a cap on their rent? They do not.

Every study that we have seen, absolutely every analysis of this crisis, has pointed to one point, and that is that the people who are hurt most by rent control are the poor. Not only did the Social Assistance Review Committee report state that, but so did the Stuart Thom commission report.

I want to talk about the Thom commission report because I happen to very much support the findings of that report and some of its recommendations. There is a popular misconception that Thom recommended getting out of rent controls. He recommended a form of rent regulation with a free market operating in tandem with that so that the poor were totally protected. It is a system which has been applied to several other jurisdictions. I will address in a moment why we will not pursue these policies; because we do not have the political will to do it, but I will come back to that point.

What I want to talk about first of all is the fact that whenever there is a crisis, we tend to try to study it and take it off the front pages of the newspapers and bury it. Maybe the previous government, of which the Speaker was a member at the time, was guilty of taking this issue of rent control just before an election and putting it in the hands of Mr Thom. After all, he did study it for five years and he spent \$3 million of taxpayers' money. It was considered by many housing specialists in North America to be one of the definitive research pieces on rent control and rental accommodation and accessibility.

Yet the then Minister of Housing, the member for Oakwood, refused to even let Mr Thom use the Queen's Park press gallery, the press offices here in this building, to make that public document available to the media, refused even to allow him to use this building. Mr Thom was forced to set up in rather cramped quarters in his own office to allow the media in to have a look at this report.

The minister dismissed in one simple sentence all of the work, that body of knowledge, the research that had gone into that. I do not wish to dwell on the lessons learned by the two previous members who are no longer not only ministers of housing but are no longer members of the Privy Council, but I do believe that the current minister will look seriously at what Stuart Thom has said. I know he is not going to look at it seriously between now and the election, because that would send a signal to tenants all over this province that the Liberals may be trying to do something that is in the best interests of affordable housing. Rather, they will do as all political parties seem to do with regularity and habit: they are going to tell tenants: "Vote for us because we will protect you. We will do what is in your best interests."

Politicians have just got to stop doing that. We have got to stop doing it because quite frankly the problems the poor are experiencing with affordability—it is not working under any of the rent control configurations in Ontario or elsewhere in this country that further go for regulation and flat-lining.

I cannot support the member's resolution. I cannot support something which flies in the face of all the research that has been done. Sure, it lasts in some provinces where they actually do vote in NDP governments. We know that they have tried it and it works for a short time, but we have also had NDP governments get out of the very resolution which the member proposes today. These are NDP governments which are saying: "It's not working. We have to get out of this."

Mr D. S. Cooke: What are the examples of that?

Mr Jackson: We will get to examples in a moment.

I want to stay with Mr Thom and share with some of the members of this House some of the statements from the Thom

commission report, which this government really did not want the public to understand.

Stuart Thom spoke extensively to the plight of the poor and the homeless in this province. Do not forget he was doing his research through the last recession in this province, in 1982-84. We are about to move into a new recession in this province, by the Treasurer's veiled comments about a recession. He calls it something different, but we do know that we are going to be going into difficult times, in comparable terms to that which we experienced in 1982 and 1983.

Stuart Thom spoke extensively about rent review and its impact on the poor. On page 22 of his report, he said:

"Rent review is not targeted to the needy. It has not helped those unable to find a unit subject to rent review and it has not provided sufficient help to households with low incomes. It has, however, served households who required no help at all. Higher-income households have remained in units subject to rent review, while the needy have been forced to seek shelter in the exempt stock which is more expensive."

We know that Mr Thom proposed a system of shelter subsidy. Just as a footnote to Hansard, because this is all in Hansard from our committee hearings, I posed the question to, I think, Professor Pat Laverty. He was the very articulate, very intelligent bureaucrat who dreamed up the residential complex cost index, the building operating cost index and all of the formula that goes with them. I said to Mr Laverty, "Why are we not considering a shelter subsidy program?" He said, "Well, it is going to be awfully expensive."

1630

Members have to put it in context. At the time, we were spending \$7.8 million on administering rent control. I said, "Tell me, Pat, how much do you think this plan is going to cost to administer?" He said, "Twelve million dollars, and we'll have it up and running in three months." It is all in Hansard.

The then minister, the member for Scarborough North, reaffirmed in his press statements that figure of \$12 million and that in three months it would be up and running. He said, "Cam, we can't have a rent subsidy program because our estimates indicate it would cost over \$20 million." That is in Hansard. Using the government's own figures, we cannot have a shelter subsidy program because it would cost \$20 million. We are spending \$50 million on bureaucracy.

We could get into a whole lot of horror stories. I have raised the question of the 9R forms. Interestingly, 100,000 copies were shredded because they were deemed to be too complex to understand. Tenants do not understand them. That is a whole other issue about this legislation that offends me. It is fundamentally wrong to provide a system which tenants rely on to keep a roof over their heads when in fact they cannot understand it and therefore they lack the means to defend themselves when they go before any proposed appeal mechanism or tribunal.

That is a fundamental issue about justice. You do not go to court unless you know how to protect yourself in court. You do not appeal a rent review decision unless you know how to appeal. I am deviating, but I have to bring this point up. Like all members of this House, I was approached, for the first time under this new Bill 51. It got us through an election and it held the promise that we were capping. It is interesting that before an election the rate is lower and after the election it is higher, but that is another issue. This was an increase, I think, of 26.9%. It was not a bad increase, now that we look back, because we have had 30%, 40% and some 60% increases.

I sat down and thought: "I have been a critic of this government and the bill. I voted against it and I had better put my money where my mouth is. I had better do some research and find out if anybody has done an appeal." So I called the ministry. They said, "No, it's too early." I said, "What do you mean it is too early?" They said, "We haven't got the system up and running." I said, "Have you had any appeals filed?" They said: "Yes, we've had one or two. They were one or two pages."

I decided it was worth the effort to try. I thought: "I have a background in housing. I am not a lawyer by trade, but it is worth it. I will do it for this one building." Actually, it has the highest concentration of social assistance recipients in my riding. Of all the buildings I could have chosen to be helpful to, this was an important building. We had one lady who was expecting her second baby. She is a single parent and it was an economic eviction situation for her.

We made a decision in our office that we were going to take this building through all the levels of appeal. It is something I will never, ever do again, but I will tell members, we put 180 hours into our brief, did all of our research and interviewed the tenants. This is what we filed. That was our first filing right there, several hundred pages, all with affidavits.

After all that work and subsequent appeals by the landlord and with us and with the landlord threatening to sue me, all sorts of stuff, we got a 6.5% rollback. It left me with a lasting concern about this legislation. That is, in order to appeal this bill or, in other words, in order to exercise the rights this government promised were inherent in this bill, a tenant would either have to go out and hire, at an incredible expense, the technical expertise in order to do an appeal properly or, quite clearly, there had to be some system to assist people in the process of appeals.

Landlords have access, and rightly so, to all sorts of accountants and lawyers to prepare their cases. Tenants do not have this on average. Rich tenants do. That is what is interesting. If you come from a wealthier area and the average income in that building is high, then it is not a big problem to put \$100 on the table to hire a lawyer and go the whole nine yards. But there are thousands of buildings in this province where tenants are making decisions about maybe skipping one or two meals in a month because they cannot afford it. Where are they going to come up with the money, \$10, \$15 or \$20 to put into a pool in order to fight the landlord?

Ours was one of the first appeals that was ever done in this province and we fought the issue about capital improvements that were done in a first year. I was told later by the ministry that it was a test case that was testing the wording in the legislation. We had \$2.5 million worth of expenditures being costed out in the first year. This was a substantive decision, yet the landlord went around and said to everybody: "If you sign this little bit of paper, we'll only pass on a little bit of it. But you have to roll over and let rent increase go through."

This system is lending itself to complications, to misinformation and, yes, even to abuse. It is unworkable and it is unfair; it is primarily unfair, as Stuart Thom told us in the Commission of Inquiry into Residential Tenancies report, to the poor, to the needy and to those who cannot afford to keep shelter over their heads in this province.

I have talked a bit about the politics of this issue. I am going to get into another area which my friends in the New Democratic Party do not like me to get into, but they know where I stand on this issue. I personally believe that we cannot survive in this province unless we have a partnership with the

private sector, and that partnership has to have very clear and decisive rules with it or else it is not a good partnership.

My friends in the NDP of course disagree with me. They think owning land is a form of thievery. That is a philosophy shared by Marx, Lenin, Bob Rae and others.

Mr Allen: That's putting it a bit extreme.

Mr Jackson: It is a bit extreme, the member for Hamilton West says. But I was standing here in this House with the member for Waterloo North—we were dealing with a non-partisan resolution on private property rights—and I distinctly remember the NDP saying, "We cannot support entrenching private property rights in the Constitution, because ownership of land is thievery."

Mr R. F. Johnston: We know you can find that anywhere in Hansard.

Mr Jackson: Actually, it was the member for Nickel Belt. That was—

Mr R. F. Johnston: He would never raise the term "thievery." "Skulduggery" maybe, but never "thievery."

Mr Jackson: The fact of the matter is that we have an ideological difference of opinion here.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Thank God Hansard will know.

Mr Jackson: From my notably agnostic friend the member for Scarborough West.

Mr R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member knows full well that I am not an agnostic, that I am blithely irreligious and quite atheistic in my views.

Mr Jackson: I thank the member for that correction and I thank God for that correction.

The point I am trying to make here very simply is that—

Mr B. Rae: What is your point, Cam?

Mr Jackson: I am glad the Leader of the Opposition has come back into the House.

We are talking about the philosophical differences between the NDP—

Mr B. Rae: I heard what you said. I wanted to be here to listen to it.

Mr Jackson: Excellent. I am delighted that the Leader of the Opposition is here.

The fact is that most jurisdictions in North America have come to the conclusion that by overly regulating and ratchetting down, by denying the relationship with the private sector in terms of a solution to bringing on more housing, by following that path we have to show for our efforts less affordable housing, less ability for people to improve and upgrade and therefore retain older housing stock.

There are sufficient reports out from the federal government, both in the United States and in Canada, which indicate that some of the restrictive legislation, which is a natural outcropping of rent control—it all starts with rent control and then it evolves into regulations on anything else you might want to do with your property, such as to convert it—certainly we need some protections there—to improve it, enhance it, even tear it down. We now cannot do anything with our property in this province.

Those jurisdictions that have done that all over North America have clearly indicated that they have had to reverse that trend or operate housing accessibility to their peril. The numbers, the costs alone of trying to compete with the private

sector are astronomical. We think health is costing a lot. To do a proper job in housing would nearly bankrupt this government.

1640

So we should be focused on that partnership. One of the key elements of that partnership is an understanding that we are here to protect those who need protection the most. That is what Stuart Thom said; that is what the Social Assistance Review Committee report said; that is what I have been saying and a growing number of people are saying.

It is clearly an absolute resolution of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. The Minister of Housing, who is also Minister of Municipal Affairs, gets this advice from them on an annual basis. The government has to find a way out of rent control and move into a modified system that deals with shelter subsidy.

Every major newspaper in this province has suggested that Stuart Thom's report had merit and that that was the direction for us to go in. Even the *Toronto Star*, which I know this government has a certain marital reliance on, has come out squarely against the proposals of flat-lining rent control and the complexity of the government's current bill, and said that the third alternative, as it were, should be considered.

I wish I could move into a couple of areas about this whole notion of the politics. I think the minister indicated he had a really nice and wonderful working relationship with the nine members of tenants groups and the nine members representing landlords, that came together. My recollection, having done all the public hearings, was that was a very awkward alliance at best. Reference was made to: "We have a gun to our head. We either capitulate or else we won't get any regulations at all."

We know that Dan McIntyre from the Federation of Ottawa-Carleton Tenants' Association, a member of that committee, broke—

Mr Chiarelli: He's an NDP candidate now.

Mr Jackson: Listen, if we started looking at all the NDPers who are now Liberals because of reading a recent poll, then we would have a long list indeed to read into this House.

A person's politics should not be the consideration when a person has clearly enunciated his credentials as a tenant advocate. Because he is a tenant advocate, he broke from this bill and he indicated it was too complex for people to understand and therefore people could not operate properly. They could not operate in a fully functioning way with full comprehension.

Mr R. F. Johnston: Did you enjoy your one term here, Mr Chiarelli?

Mr Chiarelli: After observing what I've observed, maybe it's not worth staying any longer.

Mr D. S. Cooke: You couldn't even get the hotline money reinstated for Ottawa, because the Ottawa Liberal members kept their mouths shut.

Mr Jackson: I want to thank you, Mr Speaker, for keeping order for me.

Mr Chiarelli: Be patient.

Mr Jackson: Perhaps the member for Ottawa West might participate in the debate and tell us the kinds of things he is doing for the tenants and the landlords in his riding.

Mr Chiarelli: I will.

Mr Jackson: I have already referenced the work we did on the appeal. I should also indicate that our office—I did a memo

some time ago and I did take the effort to acquire some of the manuals that are available. These are private sector manuals—certainly the government does not publish this information—which we purchased and made available to all the tenants' groups and to all small landlords in our riding. We have even offered support in setting up seminars that deal with the actual details of their building before review. That was the only thing we could see doing that would be helpful to these people in understanding how complex this legislation is.

There has been reference in this debate already about—actually, I am holding up *How to Take a Building to Rent Review*, which is a step-by-step guide to maximizing rental income. It is a guide for tenants and for landlords, if any other member is interested in offering something more than just a one-page letter to tenants' groups and to landlords saying, "We are very proud of our legislation." If you are a Liberal, you will say that. If you are an NDP member, you will say, "We did not vote for it, it is wrong, it is an evil piece of legislation and we support a cap."

However, the tenants in this province have to live with this legislation, while we politicians get caught up in our politics and our debating and our positioning for this forthcoming fall election. In the meantime, a lot of tenants out there are being hurt, a lot of small landlords are being hurt and our system continues to degenerate.

I wish I had a little more time. I wanted to get into some of the information that we had uncovered in terms of the quality of applications, the changes in the regulations, the changes in application forms. I have already referenced the 9R form, which had to be scrapped because it was too complex. We also know that the rent registry is very much behind. There was a promise from the government that we would have a fully functioning and operating rent registry, but that has not been forthcoming. The minister might respond to that.

I also wanted to talk about the fact that not all of the forms that determine what the legal rent should be for a building were ever sent out in this province and that there are a lot of buildings which may never be determined for their base rents, unless of course there is an appeal or an application greater than the guideline. We may never know what the proper legal rents will be for some buildings in this province.

Now that there are a few Liberals who have expressed interest in participating in this debate, I would invite them to indicate rather clearly, for the record, how they are dealing with some of their major increases; how they are explaining this legislation; how they intend to indicate why there are no policy initiatives coming from this government other than simply to defend Bill 51.

As I have said and I continue to suggest, I believe we have a compassionate Minister of Housing who speaks very straight and clearly on what he believes to be the facts about rent control. He has not attempted to hide the facts about the costs of this program. It is the bureaucratic difficulties which have caused the system to be less responsive and reactive to tenants' or landlords' needs.

But I suggest to the minister that either he is going to have to face this music once the crisis becomes worse, which it will, or he will have to face it in opposition, to again take on the government of the day as he did in 1975. I believe the minister was a member of the House in those days, when the Liberals objected to the alliance between the NDP and the Conservatives which brought in the then temporary measure known as rent control.

I know the minister wanted to suggest that he wanted to credit rent review to the accord document. There was another

accord document in 1975 which really in fact created rent control. In those days, Toronto had a serious illness and the rest of the province was forced to consume the medicine—the medicine being regulating rent control across the province—when in fact it was only needed in the Toronto area and perhaps sections of Hamilton, Windsor and Ottawa. But at the time, there were vacancy rates of 8% or 9% in some cities in this province.

I realize that I have put on the record most of my concerns with respect to this bill and with the NDP motion. I respect the position that they take. The NDP is consistent in its approach, and it fulfils a rather useful function in terms of public policy to help those of us who are left with the responsibility of governing.

Mr B. Rae: You certainly have shown that, Cam.

Mr Jackson: Yes. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition and I will in our lifetime talk about an accord ourselves and we will all have to eat some of those words, but until then—

Mr Kerrio: You'll be sorry.

Mr Jackson: We know how well it served the member for Niagara Falls personally. However, in all conscience, I cannot support that direction and at least I have stood in the House because of my belief system and my conviction and voted against rent review.

I also have taken this message very clearly to my constituents, and I have over 100 apartment buildings in my riding. Yet there is a growing sense of awareness and understanding on this basic principle, and that is that rent control will not work because of its universal nature and because of its over-bureaucratization, if I can get that word out properly, of a process that does not have to be that complex. It does not serve the poor and needy of this province; it does not serve them at all. The evidence is compelling. It is empirical and it is documented.

1650

I cannot in conscience support the resolution, nor can I support the government's bill. I offer an alternative. I suggest that because I believe fundamentally that the economics of housing are clear: Every time we attempt to give something away to someone who does not need it, there is that much less to give to those who truly do need it. That is never more true than it is with the poor in this province and the affordability issue. It strikes directly at the heart of the way we operate rent control in this province.

The rich do not need further protections. That is certainly something we have heard the New Democratic Party talk about when it comes to revenue and taxation, but when it comes to housing, the NDP wants to protect the rich. It is very clear, "It doesn't matter what your income is and your affordability, you're entitled to just a 4% or a 5% increase." It will not work; it cannot work. Virtually every jurisdiction in the world has found out, to its economic woe and to its social dysfunction, that it will not work.

I invite all members privately to consider carefully the alternatives that we are afforded from time to time in terms of policy. I encourage members, as I know the member—

Mr D. S. Cooke: You said this wasn't your policy, this was your personal point of view.

Mr Jackson: It is my personal point of view and I have a few additional members who have agreed. I certainly know that the—

Mr McLean: A free and open party.

Mr Jackson: Yes. The member for Frontenac-Addington has already stood in his place in this House to raise the same kinds of questions I have. Certainly his constituents appreciate him for his pragmatic approach and his ability to look beyond the politics and simply look at a problem and say, "What are the solutions available to us?"

When something is not working, we should first of all at least open our ears so that we will listen to alternatives and not close ourselves to the alternatives that could be made available to us.

Mr Neumann: What is your alternative?

Mr Jackson: If the member for Brantford had been listening, he would have heard it. He can find it in the Social Assistance Review Committee report. I know that he, having just completed hearings on food banks, knows of the reference to the fact that rent control is not working in this province. I encourage the member for Brantford, if he missed the comments in this debate, to read Hansard. That is always available to him. But welcome to the debate, since he raised the point of his attendance.

I am going to yield to the government. I want to thank the member from the NDP for his resolution, for providing a forum for this open discussion, especially at a time just before a provincial election when all of us are going to have to deal with the real issues of affordability and rent control in this province. I just hope that we will all rise above our own partisan views to listen carefully to what the tenants, based on real need, are telling us.

Mr B. Rae: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I was in my office and I heard a few things the member said. The first thing he said was he compared my views to those of Marx and Lenin, and in fact said, "Marx, Lenin and Bob Rae." The second thing he said was that the New Democratic Party regards property as theft.

Mr Jackson: Private ownership.

Mr B. Rae: Private ownership as theft; that is right. I want to say to the member—and I am not saying it by way of debate—I am asking you, Mr Speaker, to rule under section 23(h). If you make an allegation against another member, that is unparliamentary. I want to suggest that putting me in the same company as Lenin in the current context of world events is a disgusting form of McCarthyism and I would ask the member for Burlington South to withdraw it.

Mr Jackson: Mr Speaker, I respectfully withdraw the reference and the connection. However, the statement that was quoted is a matter of Hansard attributed to a member of his caucus. But I apologize for the linkage and the reference. I seriously do apologize.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Cureatz): I thank the honourable member for Burlington South. The Chair is much relieved.

Mrs E. J. Smith: Like the member for Burlington South, I was one of the members of the original committee when this bill was being formulated, so it is my pleasure today to give a little background to this and remind the members of the circumstances in which the bill was brought forward.

Before I do so, I want to address briefly some of the remarks of the member for Burlington South. Of course, we all know that the housing problem is in many ways caused by a shortage, both a shortage of housing itself and as well a

shortage of land. The economics of this has to be carefully reviewed.

If one were to consider having shelter subsidies with no controls whatsoever on rent, with just a free marketplace, one is not looking at the economic realities. In fact, the free enterprise system demands competition. If you have a government bill or a government ruling that says, "We will pick up the extra rent no matter what the landlord charges you or how much profit he is making," this would become completely uncontrollable in areas where there is a shortage.

The fact is that the government did move into some shelter support for those on social assistance only, not the working poor but social assistance only, to pick up what was over 25% of their income up to a certain controlled limit. That program alone is costing \$105 million. So the suggestion that there is some cheap way of moving into the member for Burlington South's program is ridiculous.

I want to say as well that the statement from the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale that they were promised a 4% increase is perfect nonsense. We agreed on a formula. The formula is rather like a cost of living; it was to be applied on an annual basis and was agreed upon. It was never said it would be 4%. The fact it is in the 4% range is because the cost of living was such.

I want to speak more generally on the long-term history of this bill and those factors that made it necessary.

Four years ago last month, the members of this House joined together to applaud a group of citizens sitting in the visitors' gallery. Our applause that day was directed towards 18 people who had reached an historic agreement, an agreement on a system of rent review for Ontario that would be equally fair to both landlords and tenants. As we debate the resolution of the member for Windsor-Riverside, I think it is appropriate that we, and he for that matter, consider again the origins of the Residential Rent Regulation Act.

Let us recall that this legislation came about as the result of a unique process. In December 1985, the finest tenant leaders and the best landlord leaders in Ontario were invited to join a citizens' committee that would advise the government on a new system of rent review. The committee was known as the Rent Review Advisory Committee and its 18 members—nine tenant leaders and nine landlord leaders, as I have said—represented some of the most experienced and astute representatives in this province.

This committee was asked to provide the government with a new approach to rent review that would balance the interests of landlords and tenants in a fair and effective manner and draw landlords back into the building of rental units.

Mr D. S. Cooke: Has that worked?

Mrs E. J. Smith: Yes, it has worked in London.

Not surprisingly, at the time of its formation virtually no one gave this committee a chance of surviving, never mind reaching an agreement. The concept of landlords and tenants actually working together on anything, never mind an entire system of rent review, was seen as pure pie in the sky. And yet, four months after its formation, the members of this committee reached a consensus. Their report of 18 April 1986 formed the basis of the Residential Rent Regulation Act. Small wonder that the applause of all members of this House on that day was vigorous and well deserved.

The people of Ontario owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the members of that committee. They were men and women who managed to put aside their particular interests to work for the common good. They spent hours and days and weeks, and

they literally worked through the night in order to reach an agreement.

I invite the member for Windsor-Riverside to review the report of that committee and to look also at the minutes of the six months of public hearings that followed the presentation of the report. If he does, he will find that every conceivable aspect of the new rent review system was discussed and debated in minute detail.

1700

Moreover, and perhaps most important of all, he will learn that the Residential Rent Regulation Act, as members may remember, represents a compromise. It represents a give and take between landlord and tenant leaders in Ontario. Neither side got everything it wanted, far from it. They disagreed at length and often quite bitterly throughout the process, but both sides got something very important: They got a deal. They compromised. They reached an agreement both of them could live with. That deal is the Residential Rent Regulation Act.

That deal makes the legislation entirely unique. It is, to my knowledge, the first time in the history of our province that a major piece of legislation has originated in such a fashion and the first time that the representatives of the people most directly affected by the law, the landlords and tenants of Ontario, reached an agreement about the law. It was a truly historic achievement. It is an achievement that this government is very reluctant to undermine. It is an achievement that this government is determined to defend.

Mr Reville: I must have been on a different bill from the member for London South.

It was interesting to me that my first political activity was around housing back in 1972 when I got involved with a beginning group called Neighbourhood Legal Services. We were trying to work with tenants in the south St Jamestown area who were suffering mightily at the hands of certain vicious developers who operated here in Toronto, now thankfully disbanded—at least that particular set of vicious developers.

Members can imagine my delight when, 14 years later, my leader said to me, "I want you to be Housing critic," and they can imagine how short-lived my delight was because about a minute after I was appointed Housing critic, the Rent Review Advisory Committee came down with its first report and I had to stand up and denounce it. Given that it had been written by a group of tenant representatives, it made me very nervous to have to do that.

In spite of what the member for London South says, one of the tenant leaders, Dan McIntyre, was wise enough to refuse to sign the document right off the top. All the other tenant leaders have since repudiated the document, alleging among other things that the Liberal government did not deliver on additional promises that were made in terms of supply and housing protection, which had encouraged them to sign the document in the first place.

The Minister of Housing, who was not there at the time, has a revisionist view of history. There is no question that the document was advanced under banners that flew high, saying, "Historic Agreement" and "Delicate Balance."

The member for London South talks about the first time that a bill was ever conceived in this way. Let me tell the member for London South that it is the last time tenant representatives will agree to sit down in a situation in which they are basically padlocked to landlord leaders, put into a government hide-out and told not to come out until they have made an agreement.

Those who sat through the hearings, as I did, will recall that not a single tenants' group in this whole province supported Bill 51; not a single tenants' group in the province of Ontario was prepared to say that it thought this was a good deal for it.

The Minister of Housing said no one had a better idea. That is not correct. Tenants' groups from across the province made detailed proposals to improve the bill, very detailed proposals. In fact, I turned each and every one of those proposals into an amendment. Of course those amendments were defeated by the combined strength of the Liberals and the Conservatives.

It is true that the member for Burlington South and the then member for the then riding of St George stood with the New Democrats against the bill, but if the tenants of Ontario want to know why Bill 51 is in place and why the current scrambled rent review system is in place, they have to blame the Liberals, supported by the Conservatives. It would not have passed without the support of the Conservatives because, of course, we were in that most happy of situations, a minority government.

The very first doublecross of the Liberal government was related to the housing program, because the accord was absolutely specific about what we thought was wrong with the current rent review system. Of course, the member for London South finds it convenient to forget that it said, in numerals and in words, 4% should be the rent rise, and it said that in the accord. Then the gnomes over in the Ministry of Housing invented RCCI and BOCI, if you will recall. All of a sudden, the 4% promise was forgotten and we had a building operating cost index and a residential complexes cost index, which tenant groups criticized as being unrealistic, as having inappropriate multipliers and adders and in fact creating profits for landlords which they did not need and did not deserve.

The Minister of Housing says it is not perfect. You bet it is not perfect, Mr Speaker. In fact, what happened during Bill 51 is that the Liberal government of the province swung the balance very strongly in favour of landlords to the disadvantage of tenants across the province. The member for Burlington South talks about tenants who earn \$100,000 and \$150,000 a year. In my travels across the province, I have not met many tenants who earn \$100,000 and \$150,000 a year; but, even if there were such, does not everybody deserve protection from arbitrary rent increases? Of course they do.

The notion that in 1975 protection for tenants was necessary only for those in some large centres is also poppycock. Housing is not a commodity that you can forgo when you cannot afford it, when your income does not rise as much as inflation does. Everybody needs housing. Housing must be treated as a right, not as some commodity that goes to those who can afford it and not to those who cannot. Virtually every study that has ever been done shows that trying to replace a tenant protection system with a shelter subsidy system in fact works ultimately to the detriment of tenants, because what governments discover very quickly is that they begin to impose lower and lower thresholds of who will be entitled to shelter subsidies. The results are catastrophic for people of low and moderate income.

What is clear and what the government has still not got through its head is that any housing program worthy of the name must have at least three components: it must have protection for tenants; it must have protection of the housing stock; and it must have an aggressive supply program. Regrettably, the province of Ontario has not provided any one of those in a way that is meaningful for people.

It seems to me that the tenants are going to have an opportunity to make their views known shortly. I suggest that they

rise up. They have seen the enemy. The enemy is there and there and there. The enemy is Liberals and Conservatives. Turf the rascals out.

1710

Mr Mahoney: I thought there might have been a speaker from the third party, Mr Speaker, but if not, I am delighted at this time to put my comments on the record and share with you some opinions that I hold very closely and some information about housing supply in my own community. As a matter of fact, I had the pleasure of being a past president of the Peel Non-Profit Housing Corp in the region of Peel, and I know from that experience that the supply problem is a direct result of many years of apathy.

On some points I can agree with some of the previous speakers that previous Progressive Conservative governments have totally chosen to ignore the problem. I can remember waiting with bated breath for small dribbles of allocation units coming forward from the government as if it was doing us some great favour coming out and making wonderful announcements and giving us allocations of 40, 50, 60 units at a time. We struggled with a very long and tragic waiting list in our community trying to get additional units from the government of the day.

I would just like, as one example, to show how both the present and the immediately past Minister of Housing have recognized the necessity of using the nonprofit housing sector in an attempt to try to increase the supply in our society, which has a direct bearing on the rent review process and the rent control issue. This government through the Homes Now program and through the provincial-federal joint arrangements, along with the municipalities, has provided in the past 18 months almost 1,800 units to Peel Non-Profit Housing Corp in the region of Peel. That is really quite a substantial commitment and I can assure members that the present general manager and housing commissioner in the region, Roger Maloney, would say they have never seen a government with a more aggressive, progressive commitment to the nonprofit housing field.

That commitment goes hand in hand, of course, with working with the community in an attempt to bring these housing projects on stream in the community. It requires co-operation among the various sectors, the local municipal councillors and aldermen and the housing people, the professionals within the community, as well as the member in the particular provincial riding and, in the co-operative side of it, along with the federal government. We even have good co-operation with our federal members. We appreciate that and recognize that as only one of the areas that this government can move in and has moved in, in an attempt to solve the housing supply problem.

I would like to address some of the events, though, that have taken place since 1985, some of which I had the pleasure of being in this House to be part of, along with my colleagues, and some of which occurred before my arrival on the scene here at Queen's Park.

Since assuming office in 1985, this government has moved forward with legislation which has provided the tenants of Ontario with a set of major and crucial tenant protection measures that are unprecedented in the history of this province. I would like to just share some of them with members for a moment.

For starters, we have passed measures to ensure that all tenants in Ontario can only be charged one rent increase in each calendar year.

As well, we have passed measures to ensure that all tenants in all private rental units are protected by rent review. We have

created a computerized rent registry to ensure that tenants are not charged illegal rents. We have created a Residential Rental Standards Board to ensure that tenants throughout the province receive proper maintenance of their rental units.

We have passed legislation which outlaws the charging of key money to ensure that tenants are not the victims of this unscrupulous practice. We have made changes to the Landlord and Tenant Act to extend protect to include roomers, boarders and lodgers. We have passed the Rental Housing Protection Act to ensure that tenants are protected from the conversion of rental housing units. We have regulated suite hotels to ensure that tenants are not victimized by the operators of illegal suite hotels.

Landlords are now required to inform tenants in advance of planned renovations or suffer a financial penalty at rent review. Under the new rules, landlords planning to do capital expenditures must notify all the tenants in writing at least 30 days before entering into a contract for the work.

A landlord is now required to provide a written description of a number of things: (1) the nature and extent of the renovation; (2) the estimated cost; (3) the earliest date that work will begin; (4) the amount of disruption due to the work, and (5) the reason for the work. In cases which involve replacing items within a tenant's unit such as appliances, cupboards, tiles or bathroom fixtures, the landlord must also obtain written agreement from the tenant. The landlord will lose a 5% allowance at rent review if tenants are not properly notified of a capital expenditure or if the agreement of tenants is not obtained for work within their units.

I want to stress that none, not a single one, of the crucial tenant protection measures which I have just mentioned was in place prior to this government's taking office. In 1985, this government promised to clean up the haphazard and piecemeal approach to tenant protection which was inherited, and this government has done exactly that. The passage of the Residential Rent Regulation Act in December 1986 created a new system of rent review—

Miss Martel: It gave a blank cheque to landlords, and you know it.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Mahoney: I am delighted to see that I am getting through and that the honourable member for Sudbury East is paying attention.

Miss Martel: I doubt that.

Mr Mahoney: I would be delighted to listen to your comments.

As I was saying, the passage of the Residential Rent Regulation Act in December 1986 created a new system of rent review which provided the focus of these fundamental protections for tenants. It is rather incredible that the member for Windsor-Riverside actually seems to believe that the Residential Rent Regulation Act favours landlords over tenants. In fact, the truth of the matter—not something I am particularly convinced that member is interested in—is that the legislation offers superb protection for tenants in the province of Ontario. As proof, one need only look at the changes which have come about as a result of the Residential Rent Regulation Act.

Miss Martel: You don't believe that.

Mr Mahoney: I would not say it if I did not believe it. All tenants in Ontario are now protected, unlike some of my col-

leagues in this House who think they can say just about anything they want.

An hon member: And they do.

Mr Mahoney: And they do, and it has been proven that they had better not.

All tenants in this province are now protected from arbitrary rent increases of any amount. In the past, tenants in units built after 1975 could and did receive rent increases of any amount on a monthly basis. The Residential Rent Regulation Act has prevented this from happening.

Mr Philip: The guy who wrote Bill's speech was a better writer.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. One member at a time. There is sufficient time for all members of all parties to express themselves one after another, not all together. The member for Mississauga West.

Mr Mahoney: I do not mind that they want to join in, but they will have an opportunity, I am sure, to add their own comments when I am finished, as the Speaker has suggested.

All tenants are now protected from illegal rents and illegal rent increases by a rent registry. In the past, tenants were at a loss to determine whether the rent they were paying for a unit was the legal rent for that unit. Again, the Residential Rent Regulation Act has changed this.

All tenants now enjoy the benefits of the Residential Rental Standards Board. This board has been established to ensure that tenants throughout the province of Ontario receive proper maintenance of their rental units. Failure by a landlord to meet proper maintenance standards is directly tied to the suspension or forfeiture of rent increases, again a first for Ontario in tenant protection and again a direct result of the Residential Rent Regulation Act.

The same holds for the charging of key money, a long-standing practice which victimized tenants in Ontario. We have outlawed this practice and we have established an active investigation unit. We currently have more than 200 charges pending before the courts and we have obtained numerous convictions which have saved prospective tenants literally thousands of dollars.

We have amended the Landlord and Tenant Act to include protection for roomers, boarders and lodgers in the province. Previously, these individuals were left totally unprotected, without any legal rights whatsoever. No longer is that true.

We have created a regulation governing suite hotel units, setting out the specific criteria such units must meet in order to prove that they warrant exemption from rent review. We move quickly against any unscrupulous landlords who attempt to circumvent rent review by converting rental units to illegitimate suite hotels.

Further, on conversions, we established the Rental Housing Protection Act in 1986, then made it permanent in 1989. This legislation has been most effective in reducing the loss of affordable rental housing by requiring municipal approval of the demolition or conversion of such housing.

In all, our government has brought into effect since 1985 some of the most comprehensive tenant protection legislation in the nation, legislation which, it must be stressed, did not even exist in any way, shape or form in the past. The Residential Rent Regulation Act is the centrepiece of these tenant protection measures. It is one of the most important and one of the most effective pieces of legislation in the province of Ontario.

1720

Mrs Grier: I think it is very helpful to have these kinds of debates in this Legislature, because it allows those people who are concerned, like the tenants who mounted a very effective lobby today, an opportunity to see at first hand the differences in approach in the government of this party on rental housing protection, on rent review and on attitudes to tenants generally. To hear government members like the last member in their defence and justification of a piece of legislation that is not working is really quite incredible. If it were working, why would so many tenants come out today, wanting to see members of the Legislature talk about their own individual cases and the hardships they were suffering as a result of this legislation?

In a riding like mine, where almost 50% of the residents are tenants, the effect of this legislation is very clear. It is a hardship to tenants. It does not protect them. It does not guarantee them security. It does not guarantee their rent will be controlled anywhere near the level that is the annual maximum increase.

Most of the buildings in my riding are privately owned. We do not have a large pool of subsidized housing and we have a lot of people who are living in small buildings, be they triplexes or three- and four-storey walk-up buildings that were constructed perhaps 20 years ago. Because of the rent review legislation that has been in this province, many of those rents are still reasonable and the housing is affordable.

It is occupied by people who are particularly vulnerable when there is a massive increase in their rent: by a lot of senior citizens, by a lot of people who are living on disability pensions and by single parents who are trying to bring up children on inadequate incomes. So when they are hit, as one building in my riding was this year, by an approved rent increase of 32.96%, that has a very dramatic effect upon them. They are already probably paying far more of their income on rent than they ought to be, and when they are hit with that kind of an increase, they are not able to find alternative accommodation.

If this legislation were as good as the government members are telling us it is, there would not be as many people as there are in that particular situation.

Not only are these kinds of tenants particularly vulnerable to massive increases, they are vulnerable in the delays that occur and in the uncertainty that is created by how long the process takes for them when their landlords do apply for rent review.

They are vulnerable because of another piece of legislation of this government, the whole question of renovations and the pass-through that occurs, the low-rise rehabilitation program, for which I had some hope when it was introduced. I thought that buildings such as the many that exist in Etobicoke-Lakeshore would benefit from that legislation. I think the only people who have benefited are companies that install new windows. Regal Aluminum and Columbia Windows seem to have large advertisements on the majority of the buildings in my riding that they are doing something about the windows. It takes them for ever to do it, and the windows that they install, courtesy of the low-interest grants they get under the program, are not energy-efficient windows. They are just a replacement, in many cases, of the single-pane windows that were there initially, and in many cases, I suspect, some of those costs get passed on back to the tenants.

Of course, the other way in which these tenants are most vulnerable is in the speculation that goes on in their buildings. In my riding, speculators are playing Monopoly with property. They are buying apartment buildings and flipping them con-

stantly, and they are buying them in the hope that they will get from the city council increasingly high densities as they demolish those buildings. Yes, they are looking to demolish many of those buildings.

When it comes to new supply, the alleged policy of this government that 25% of new supply will be affordable is also a joke. The interpretation of that guideline is so loose that it is not in any way going to replace some of the housing that I know is going to be lost as new development occurs.

We have, for example, one developer who is going to build 1,100 units on the waterfront in my riding. There will be no affordable housing because the land is too valuable land to have affordable housing put on it. But he also happens to own an industrial site where McGuinness's distillery used to be, and he is going to be allowed to put affordable housing on that site. So he will build 1,100 luxury condominiums on the waterfront and he will build 1,800 units on the industrial site, but only 25% of the 1,800 units are going to be affordable, not 25% of the total number of units he is going to be allowed to build. That is the interpretation that this ministry is prepared to put on its own guidelines.

The interpretation of the Rental Housing Protection Act is in many cases even more bizarre. I have some buildings in my riding that were vacant on 30 June 1989, when the new Rental Housing Protection Act came into place. Members will remember that the amendments to that act were to prevent municipalities from approving demolition of vacant units, but lo and behold, because these were vacant on 30 June 1989, they are subject to the old act and the owner has now turned them into a co-ownership, even though they were vacant, so the occupants at this time say, "Oh, we're not tenants, we're co-owners of the units and we've all applied for a demolition permit." I have no indication from this ministry that that demolition permit is going to be denied, and I am quite sure that the city of Etobicoke, which has no commitment whatsoever to affordable housing or to the protection of tenants, will be only too anxious to issue that demolition permit.

In my municipality of Etobicoke, this government has funded the preparation of housing policy statements with grants from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Ministry of Housing, and yet does nothing to make sure that the municipality, having developed those policy statements, lives up to the commitments or to the criteria that were supposedly established in those statements.

What that means is that as a building is allowed to be demolished, as a couple already have been in my riding, we see a domino effect. The Ontario Municipal Board and the ministry in the city rule, "Well, demolition of 37 units is not going to affect the overall supply." But then the owner of the building across the street decides he is going to apply for a demolition permit too. So there is a cumulative effect and we lose affordable rental housing units because of the inadequacies of those laws.

What it boils down to is no understanding or commitment or recognition on the part of this government of the fact that housing is essential, that housing, as the tenants who are there today say on their buttons, is a right. I agree with the member for Windsor-Riverside, who moved this resolution, that it is time we clearly established that housing in this province is a right.

You cannot live in this province, in our climate, without housing. Why ought you then to be subject to the whims of the landlords, to the whims of the speculators, to the whims of a government that does not have a commitment to tenants? We

have a commitment to provide health as a right. We provide education as a right. It is time that we stopped considering housing to be something that could be bought and sold on the open market and was not considered to be something that had to be provided at a reasonable rent to half the population, to the tenant half of the population.

It is all very well for those of us who are able to own homes to say, "Fine, we gain some when the market rises and property values rise," but we are a privileged section of society because we can do that. Surely we have an obligation to those who desire, perhaps, not to own property or who are forced to live in rented accommodation, that they will not be subject to the vagaries of the market, that they can be assured that they have security in the accommodation that they occupy, that they have a right to that accommodation. That is what this resolution moves to achieve, and I think it is deplorable that the government is not prepared to support it.

Ms Poole: No discussion of rent review in Ontario would be complete without reference to the Rental Housing Protection Act. This legislation provides tenants in Ontario with one of the most comprehensive pieces of tenant protection in Canada.

As members will recall, the Rental Housing Protection Act passed in July 1986 as a crucial component of the agreement reached by landlords and tenants in the Rent Review Advisory Committee. A major part of the compromise which they reached on a new system of rent review involved the establishment of separate legislation to protect rental housing stock and the security of tenure of tenants in Ontario.

1730

Until that time, tenants in Ontario effectively had no legislative grounds on which to fight action which drastically threatened their homes. Essentially, before this legislation, landlords were free to convert rental housing to condominiums, to gut rental units through renovations, to demolish rental housing at will or simply to change rental housing to another use, with no protections to stop them.

The passage of the Rental Housing Protection Act put a stop to the wholesale destruction threatening major portions of Ontario's rental housing stock. With the passage of the act, municipal council approval is required for proposals to convert, renovate, demolish or change the use of rental housing.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Ms Poole: This legislation has had a dramatic effect on the supply of rental housing in Ontario.

Mr Pouliot: How do you explain to the tenants in your riding that their rent is doubling? Tell them you support that.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Ms Poole: Countless units have been saved from—

The Deputy Speaker: The members are getting restless again. Order.

Mr Ballinger: The member for Lake Nipigon is totally out of order.

Mr Pouliot: When did you become Speaker?

Mr Ballinger: When did you become judge and jury?

Mr Pouliot: No, but I can count, sir. I can count very well.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please, the member for Lake Nipigon.

Hon Mr Sweeney: We didn't interrupt when your speakers were on their feet.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Are the members finished?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Le député de lac Nipigon, s'il vous plaît, and other members.

Ms Poole: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Since the member for Mississauga West and I were both interrupted numerous times by the members of the New Democratic Party, would we please be reinstated for several minutes on the clock?

The Deputy Speaker: Please continue. There were interruptions from members of all three parties this afternoon.

Ms Poole: Countless units have been saved from conversion or demolition because of the Rental Housing Protection Act. Indeed, we cannot even begin to estimate the number of units which might have been lost, and crucially, the number of tenants who would have lost their homes without this legislation.

That is the reason why in 1989 we decided to make this legislation permanent, and not only permanent, but we also improved it to provide tenants with additional protection from activities which might disrupt their possession of their homes.

One of the main examples of this is that coverage under the act has been extended to include vacant rental residential properties. This provision removes any incentives for landlords to get their buildings vacant, sometimes by questionable means, in order to escape the provisions of the act.

Another key change was that landlords must now get municipal approval for renovations or repairs which are extensive enough that vacant possession would be required for the work.

Still another change requires landlords to obtain municipal approval of eviction notices for personal possession where more than one unit in any three-year period is required for the owner's use.

As well, the 1989 act strengthens enforcement procedures, extending the statute of limitations from six months to two years while enabling our inspectors to obtain warrants from a justice of the peace to investigate possible violations of the act. Perhaps the most significant new enforcement power enables us to ask a court to stop the conversion of a rental unit or require that the unit be returned to rental use or require—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Ms Poole: —that a displaced tenant be returned to his or her home; in all, some very strong enforcement procedures, and, I might add, enforcement of this legislation has been strenuous.

I am proud of the Liberal members in this Legislature who have worked to strengthen and make permanent the Rental Housing Protection Act.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Will the member for Nickel Belt withdraw that remark, please?

Mr Laughren: Absolutely.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Ms Poole: As I was saying, I am proud of the Liberal members in this Legislature who have successfully worked to reinstate the tenants' hotline for the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations, and I am proud of the Liberal members who have worked to increase tenant protection with regulations to discourage luxury renovations. Contrary to what the opposition will have members believe, the Liberals do care about tenants and we are working hard on their behalf.

The Deputy Speaker: The third party had some time left, and I believe the NDP. Did some members want to use the time left?

Mr B. Rae: I am delighted to be able to participate in the debate. I want to begin by saying that, in my experience of politics, it is one of the most important issues facing this province and facing the people of Ontario. I can also tell members that when I was a social worker in England one of the very first projects that I worked on was trying to deal with the deterioration of property in London, England, and the ways in which this could be overcome.

This was the time of great exploitation of tenants by landlords. I suspect that if I were to go back, I would find that it is still a time of great exploitation of tenants by large landlords. We had properties that were being allowed to deteriorate, that were going very badly downhill, and of course we had the usual charge, which the minister has repeated again today and has repeated in many answers to me, that the main reason he does not believe in a real system of rent control that would actually work is because it would lead to a deterioration of property.

I want to say this very directly to the minister, that unless he does something to increase the power and ability of tenants, unless he extends the property rights of tenants as opposed to simply leaving passive owners free to do nothing with what in fact is the shelter of other people, then it is quite possible that property will be allowed to deteriorate. The minister mentions the example of New York City. The problem in New York City is that the laws in the state of New York and in the city of New York are not sufficiently strong to give tenants the right and the ability to withhold rent, the right and the ability to insist on improvements and repairs, and simply leave a situation where landlords' political power is left completely intact and untouched.

That is why I say that the point that has been made by a number of speakers from the New Democratic Party has to be made again, and that is that the New Democratic Party believes so profoundly in the notion of property that we believe everybody ought to have some and not just the banks, the trust companies and the landlords. That is the difference between the New Democratic Party and the Tory party.

The member for Burlington South, in a speech that touched on many subjects, said that he believed that, "There ought to be a partnership between the private sector and the public sector, but of course the New Democratic Party would never agree with that." Then he went on to associate my views with those of Lenin and said that I did not believe in the rights of private ownership. I got the member to withdraw the McCarthyite charge, which he withdrew. I also want to say to him that the suggestion that he is going to solve the housing problem without a partnership between all the sectors of our economy is, of course, nonsense.

Any serious political party in this province understands that it is going to require a partnership between government, the non-profit and co-operative sector and, yes, the private sector in

order for us to arrive at a healthy housing policy. We have a marketplace; we also have a social marketplace.

Mr Jackson: Well, then we agree.

Mr B. Rae: The member for Burlington South says, "Well, then we agree." I hope we would, at least in this House, be able to agree on some fundamental values without making absolutely ridiculous allegations about the political beliefs of other members, such as the member for Burlington South made in his speech, and then appreciate that within that broader framework we can have some very real differences about where the balance should be and how the policies in fact are really working.

We have demonstrated the reason we opposed this legislation when it came down, the reason we opposed the Liberal legislation when it came down, was because we said it would be too bureaucratic, it would be too complicated and it would fail to work, it would fail to protect the real interests of tenants. We have been proven to be right. We were right. The Tories, with one or two exceptions, and the Liberals were wrong. They said this system would work marvels. It has not worked marvels for tenants; it has, on the contrary, worked marvels for landlords.

It is an odd experience for me, but I can tell members I go occasionally to a charity dinner of some kind, or something else, and a person in the development field or somewhere will sit me down and say, "Do you know what's going on because of the rent review law the Liberals brought in?" I say, "I know it's a bad deal for tenants." Then they will say, "No, let me show you." They will take their pen out and the back of a piece of paper and they will say, "Harry flips to Joe, and Joe flips to Harry, and Harry flips to Sam, and Sam flips to Joe, and Joe flips to Sam," and it goes on and on and the price keeps getting ratcheted up and up. That is the Liberal system of rent review. That is what has happened under the Liberal system of rent review.

1740

Mr Polsinelli: It's all been capped.

Mr B. Rae: The member for Yorkview says, "It's all been capped." I say to the member, if it has all been capped, why are the buildings in my riding still being flipped, why are the tenants at Jane and Woolner meeting their four, fifth and sixth landlord when they have been in the building for seven years? I will tell him why. Because they are making a mean buck doing it. If they were not making a mean buck doing it, they would not be doing it. That is the way the market works and that is how it operates. The member knows that as well as I do. He knows as well as I do that he has tenants in his riding who are paying too much rent and who are continuing to get increases imposed every year of 8% and 9% and 10% when the rate of inflation is 4% and 5%, and he knows the reason why as well as I know the reason why. The reason is because the landlord community has driven a truck through the rent review legislation. That is the system that we have.

My colleague the member for Windsor-Riverside, as the Housing critic most recently of our party, has brought forward example after example where, because of the loopholes in terms of capital expenditure, because of the loopholes in terms of financial loss, there are rent increases of as high as 189% which have been imposed on some tenants. This is the equivalent of eviction. It is an economic form of eviction. It is a message to somebody who is making a few hundred dollars a month on a fixed pension or on a fixed income, it is a message to him that he is gone and that he will have to go, and that they are looking

for what one landlord described to me as a better class of tenant. This is the recipe for homelessness and this is the recipe for disaster and this is the recipe that is being followed by the Liberal government of Ontario.

There is an alternative. The alternative is a system which says we are going to have a system of rent control in the province which will provide some very real protection. There are those who will say, "Well, if you do that, landlords will stop flipping and you will decrease the value of buildings and landlords will want to get out of the business." I can say without any hesitation that if that is the case, then I do not see why a building which is 10 or 12 or 15 years old should not be able to be purchased by the tenants as a group and should not be able to be operated on a non-profit basis for the benefit of the tenants who are in that building. If that is the only way and the most effective way to deal with the question of increases, then let's deal with it. If that is how the marketplace will respond to an intelligent and tough system of rent control, then let not our policy be paralysed as it was for a decade under the Tories, between 1975 and 1985, where, yes, they brought in a form of rent review for some tenants but at the same time they had absolutely no supply program going whatsoever.

I think that the expansion of the non-profit sector into buildings that are currently owned by private developers and by numbered companies is an entirely healthy development. It is a positive one. It gives tenants more rights. It is an extension of our democracy to people who have very little power in the marketplace whatsoever, very little ability to deal with the quality of their lives and it gives them the ability to exercise some control over what is a very fundamental part of how they live—their shelter—how they want to live, how they want to deal with it.

It is not only people who own private property in a home who should have rights; tenants who live in apartments should also have rights. That is the basis of our message—

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time is up.

Mr B. Rae: —that is the basis of the policy of the New Democratic Party and that is why we believe so profoundly in it.

Mr Chiarelli: I did have some more extensive comments to make, but there is only about a minute and a half left, so I will try to capture the element of my position here. I wanted to do a statistical analysis and address some facts rather than rhetoric.

First of all, on those cases which go to review—less than 20%—there is an average increase of 10.8%. Let's look at how that 10.8% is made up: 4.2% for operating costs, 2.5% for financial loss and 2.5% for capital expenditures. All other factors comprise 1.6%.

Yet the member for Windsor-Riverside says that these provisions intentionally reward the speculative purchase of buildings and intentionally reward landlords for unnecessary renovations, as though the minister and his officials went in the back room and said, "Let's design a system to help speculation and to create unnecessary repairs." That is pure hogwash. The numbers do not hold out.

Second, the statistics show that financial loss accounts for only 2.5% of the increase, and the statistics show capital expenditures are only 2.5% of the increase. But more important is the fact that in 1987 over 80% of the tenants in Ontario had an increase of 5.2%. In 1988 it was 4.78% and in 1989, 4.6%. In 1990 it will probably be 4.6% again.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Chiarelli: Those are the facts. The member for Windsor-Riverside should sit down and admit it.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. We have some time left. Do other members want to use the time left?

Mr Pouliot: Just briefly, what has happened is that you have twice the rate of inflation and, if you use a factor of 72, you cannot twist figures, with the highest of respect.

Mr Reyecraft: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: My understanding is that the official opposition party's time had expired. Can you advise us how we are proceeding? If indeed there has been a division of the unused time, the member for Ottawa West had indicated that he really wanted more time to make his remarks. Perhaps he could get some and then the official opposition party could make its comments.

Mr Wildman: On the point of order, we made it clear that our time had expired and that we were prepared to have a division. So we are prepared to have a division. It was only because the table officers indicated that the time could or should be used that my friend the member for Lake Nipigon decided to intervene in the debate.

The Deputy Speaker: It is a rare occurrence when a party will allow the time to be used. I offered it to members and I saw two members pop up. It became free time for any member of the House. At the time that the third party offered its time, the first person who stood was a member of the official opposition. I recognized the member.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Chiarelli: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I believe the understanding that the time expired occurred when I was on my feet. If there is going to be additional time allocated, I would appreciate the opportunity to continue.

The Deputy Speaker: We have a few minutes left. I would appreciate the member sharing the time with the member for Ottawa West. Is there agreement?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Lake Nipigon was the one I recognized.

1750

Mr Pouliot: I would quite agree to reciprocate. This is quite a surprise and I realize that things need to be said. You did acquiesce, Mr Speaker, that there was approximately some 11 minutes of time left, time enough, perhaps, to draw a comparison, a parallel. The minister must understand that the tenants in the province of Ontario, more specifically in Metropolitan Toronto, do not have the latitude, the cushion, that is given elsewhere.

I am going to tell the minister that if the Liberal Party of the province of Quebec was to use the same tactics, the same rent increases, ranging anywhere from 10% to 12% in the province of Quebec, they would be tossed out of office. He is putting the tenants in the city of Toronto, with respect, under a literal state of siege. What he is telling the tenants year after year, with an increase of 10% to 12% using the factor of 72, is that their rent shall double every six years.

I will give the minister an example. In my case, it is shared and paid for by the taxpayers of Ontario via one of the benefits

that we have if we represent a riding that is outside Metro Toronto. In fact, to the day, five years ago today, when I was elected to represent the people of Lake Nipigon, I had to rent an apartment, a one-bedroom cubicle at Bay and Charles. I remember it so vividly, as if it was this afternoon. The landlord said, "Mr Pouliot, you shall pay \$638," which I passed to the taxpayers of Ontario by virtue of the provisions set forth. The same cubicle five years later, with no improvement whatsoever, is now costing the taxpayers of Ontario \$930.

What about the people? What about the rich against us? What about the rich against people who are on fixed incomes and have nowhere else to go? What about the reality that the leader of our party has mentioned, that there is a tacit eviction notice? There is no competition of the marketplace by virtue of the lack of a vacancy rate. What are you going to do to those people? You are bridging the middle class.

People cannot afford to live within the recommendation of the Economic Council of Canada, to pay between 25% and 30%. They are being gouged. They are being gouged by virtue of ambiguity, by virtue of a lack of clarity, vision, intent and spirit; the kind of legislation that affords no protection to people but serves only one purpose, which is the purpose and the right for a selected section in our society, the people who have more to live at the expense of the less fortunate.

What the tenants are telling the minister is: "We have some difficulties understanding your legislation for you have brought some 50 amendments. But more important, we must devote a higher percentage of our income, real money on the table when we have so little left. What choice do we have? Do we leave the city of Toronto to go elsewhere? To go perhaps to another province, in some cases after having spent all our adult life in Toronto?" It is not unlike sending a Turk to Denmark.

The minister deserves, with high respect, not as a person but in the political context, to be judged very harshly, for very little can match the kind of arrogance that has been demonstrated by ill-fated but certainly ill-thought legislation that gives people the right to exercise a profit which is above normalcy.

We all understand—people in the New Democratic Party are the first to acquiesce that if you make an investment in the marketplace, provided you have the component of competition, you shall be entitled to a fair, reasonable return on investment. That is the way society works. But the government has not done this. There is no element of competition. People are given the right to fleece, the right to gouge, and the minister shall be asked to carry the guilt for his government.

The Deputy Speaker: Correct me if I am wrong, but the official opposition has not agreed to give up its time. They still have some time. It is their time.

Mr Kerrio: It is not their time.

The Deputy Speaker: Yes, it is.

Mr Wildman: If it is our time, we will give it to them.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Mr Chiarelli: How much time is that, may I ask?

The Deputy Speaker: Until 1755.

Mr Chiarelli: I just wanted to make a comment on the so-called backlog in the review system. As we know, the units that were built post-1975 at one point were not included and they are now included in the process. When that first came on stream, it put an additional 18,000 units into the system, which created a so-called backlog of 25,000. In the past several years we have cleared 42,000 of these particular units through the system and we are back down to the normal 7,000 units.

When I was first elected in 1987, I came into this House for about 14 months, and in question period after question period I heard the opposition talking about the backlog, the backlog, the backlog. For some reason, they do not stand up and talk about the backlog any more because they know the system is working. This Housing minister has reduced the 25,000 backlog to 7,000 units and, quite frankly, in my opinion the tenants appreciate the time to make their case.

1800

The House divided on Mr D. S. Cooke's motion, which was negatived on the following vote:

Ayes—16

Allen, Breaugh, Bryden, Charlton, Cooke, D. S., Grier, Hampton, Laughren, Mackenzie, Martel, Morin-Strom, Philip, E., Pouliot, Rae, B., Reville, Wildman.

Nays—52

Adams, Ballinger, Brown, Campbell, Caplan, Carrothers, Chiarelli, Cleary, Collins, Daigeler, Dietsch, Eakins, Elliot, Elston, Epp, Eves, Faubert, Fawcett, Furlong, Haggerty, Hart, Jackson, Johnson, J. M., Kanter, Kerrio, Keyes, Kozyra, Kwinter, Lupusella, Mancini, Matrondola, McClelland, McLean, McLeod, Miclash, Neumann, O'Neil, H., Oddie Munro, Owen, Phillips, G., Polsinelli, Poole, Ray, M. C., Reycraft, Smith, E. J., Sola, South, Sterling, Sweeney, Villeneuve, Wilson, Wong.

The House adjourned at 1803.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|--|
| Adams, Peter | Peterborough | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment |
| Allen, Richard | Hamilton West | NDP | |
| Ballinger, William G. | Durham-York | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Beer, Hon Charles | York North | L | Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. | Muskoka-Georgian Bay | L | Minister of Tourism and Recreation, minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Bossy, Maurice L. | Chatham-Kent | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Bradley, Hon James J. | St Catharines | L | Minister of the Environment |
| Brandt, Andrew S. | Sarnia | PC | Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party |
| Breaugh, Michael J. | Oshawa | NDP | First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Brown, Michael A. | Algoma-Manitoulin | L | |
| Bryden, Marion | Beaches-Woodbine | NDP | |
| Callahan, Robert V. | Brampton South | L | |
| Campbell, Sterling | Sudbury | L | |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor | Oriole | L | Minister of Health |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. | Oakville South | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Charlton, Brian A. | Hamilton Mountain | NDP | |
| Chiarelli, Robert | Ottawa West | L | |
| Cleary, John C. | Cornwall | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Collins, Hon Shirley | Wentworth East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. | Renfrew North | L | Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities, Minister of Skills Development |
| Cooke, David R. | Kitchener | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Citizenship |
| Cooke, David S. | Windsor-Riverside | NDP | House leader |
| Cordiano, Joseph | Lawrence | L | |
| Cousens, W. Donald | Markham | PC | |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. | London North | PC | |
| Cureatz, Sam L. | Durham East | PC | Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Curling, Alvin | Scarborough North | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Daigeler, Hans | Nepean | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Revenue |
| Dietsch, Michael M. | St Catharines-Brock | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour |
| Eakins, John F. | Victoria-Haliburton | L | |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. | Perth | L | Speaker |
| Elliot, R. Walter | Halton North | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Housing |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. | Bruce | L | Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Financial Institutions |
| Epp, Herbert A. | Waterloo North | L | |
| Eves, Ernie L. | Parry Sound | PC | House leader |
| Farnan, Michael | Cambridge | NDP | |
| Faubert, Frank | Scarborough-Ellesmere | L | |
| Fawcett, Joan M. | Northumberland | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Skills Development |
| Ferraro, Rick E. | Guelph | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|---|
| Fleet, David | High Park-Swansea | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Fontaine, Hon René | Cochrane North | L | Minister of Northern Development |
| Fulton, Ed | Scarborough East | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation |
| Furlong, Allan W. | Durham Centre | L | |
| Grandmaître, Bernard C. | Ottawa East | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health |
| Grier, Ruth A. | Etobicoke-Lakeshore | NDP | |
| Haggerty, Ray | Niagara South | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| Hampton, Howard | Rainy River | NDP | |
| Harris, Michael D. | Nipissing | PC | |
| Hart, Hon Christine E. | York East | L | Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Henderson, D. James | Etobicoke-Humber | L | Parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Hošek, Chaviva | Oakwood | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet |
| Jackson, Cameron | Burlington South | PC | |
| Johnson, Jack | Wellington | PC | |
| Johnston, Richard F. | Scarborough West | NDP | |
| Kanter, Ron | St Andrew-St Patrick | L | |
| Kerrio, Vincent G. | Niagara Falls | L | |
| Keyes, Kenneth A. | Kingston and The Islands | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education |
| Kormos, Peter | Welland-Thorold | NDP | |
| Kozyra, Taras B. | Port Arthur | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Northern Development |
| Kwinter, Hon Monte | Wilson Heights | L | Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Laughren, Floyd | Nickel Belt | NDP | |
| LeBourdais, Linda | Etobicoke West | L | |
| Leone, Laureano | Downsview | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Lipsett, Ron | Grey | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy |
| Lupusella, Tony | Dovercourt | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Government Services |
| MacDonald, Keith | Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings | L | |
| Mackenzie, Bob | Hamilton East | NDP | |
| Mahoney, Steven W. | Mississauga West | L | |
| Mancini, Hon Remo | Essex South | L | Minister of Revenue |
| Marland, Margaret | Mississauga South | PC | |
| Martel, Shelley | Sudbury East | NDP | |
| Matrundola, Gino | Willowdale | L | |
| McCague, George R. | Simcoe West | PC | |
| McClelland, Carman | Brampton North | L | |
| McGuigan, James F. | Essex-Kent | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| McLean, Allan K. | Simcoe East | PC | |
| McLeod, Hon Lyn | Fort William | L | Minister of Energy, Minister of Natural Resources |
| Miclash, Frank | Kenora | L | |
| Miller, Gordon I. | Norfolk | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation |
| Morin, Hon Gilles E. | Carleton East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Morin-Strom, Karl E. | Sault Ste Marie | NDP | |
| Neumann, David E. | Brantford | L | |
| Nicholas, Cindy | Scarborough Centre | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Solicitor General |
| Nixon, J. Bradford | York Mills | L | |
| Nixon, Hon Robert F. | Brant-Haldimand | L | Deputy Premier, Treasurer of Ontario, Minister of Economics |
| Oddie Munro, Lily | Hamilton Centre | L | |
| Offer, Hon Steven | Mississauga North | L | Solicitor General |
| O'Neil, Hon Hugh P. | Quinte | L | Minister of Mines |
| O'Neill, Yvonne | Ottawa-Rideau | L | |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|---|
| Owen, Bruce | Simcoe Centre | L | |
| Patten, Hon Richard | Ottawa Centre | L | Minister of Correctional Services |
| Pelissero, Harry E. | Lincoln | L | |
| Peterson, Hon David R. | London Centre | L | Premier, President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Philip, Ed | Etobicoke-Rexdale | NDP | |
| Phillips, Hon Gerry | Scarborough-Agincourt | L | Minister of Labour |
| Poirier, Jean | Prescott and Russell | L | Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Pollock, Jim | Hastings-Peterborough | PC | |
| Polsinelli, Claudio | Yorkview | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General |
| Poole, Dianne | Eglinton | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Pope, Alan W. | Cochrane South | PC | |
| Pouliot, Gilles | Lake Nipigon | NDP | |
| Rae, Bob | York South | NDP | Leader of the Official Opposition |
| Ramsay, Hon David | Timiskaming | L | Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Ray, Michael C. | Windsor-Walkerville | L | |
| Reville, David | Riverdale | NDP | Chief whip |
| Reycraft, Douglas R. | Middlesex | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Treasurer and Minister of Economics |
| Riddell, Jack | Huron | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources |
| Roberts, Marietta L. D. | Elgin | L | |
| Runciman, Robert W. | Leeds-Grenville | PC | |
| Ruprecht, Tony | Parkdale | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services |
| Scott, Hon Ian G. | St George-St David | L | Attorney General |
| Smith, David W. | Lambton | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Correctional Services |
| Smith, E. Joan | London South | L | Chief government whip |
| Sola, John | Mississauga East | L | |
| Sorbara, Hon Gregory S. | York Centre | L | Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| South, Larry | Frontenac-Addington | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Mines |
| Sterling, Norman W. | Carleton | PC | |
| Stoner, Norah | Durham West | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities |
| Sullivan, Barbara | Halton Centre | L | |
| Sweeney, Hon John | Kitchener-Wilmot | L | Minister of Housing and Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Tatham, Charlie | Oxford | L | |
| Velshi, Murad | Don Mills | L | |
| Villeneuve, Noble | Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry | PC | Chief whip |
| Ward, Hon Christopher C. | Wentworth North | L | Minister of Government Services, government House leader |
| Wildman, Bud | Algoma | NDP | |
| Wilson, Hon Mavis | Dufferin-Peel | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Wiseman, Douglas J. | Lanark-Renfrew | PC | |
| Wong, Hon Robert C. | Fort York | L | Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for the Ontario Human Rights Commission, minister responsible for multiculturalism, minister responsible for race relations |
| Wrye, Hon William | Windsor-Sandwich | L | Minister of Transportation |
| Vacant | Ottawa South | | |

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Administration of justice: chair, Mr Chiarelli; vice-chair, Mr McClelland; members, Messrs D. R. Cooke, Hampton, Kanter, Kormos, Miss Nicholas, Messrs Polsinelli, Runciman, D. W. Smith and Sterling; clerk, Douglas Arnott.

Estimates: chair, Mr McCague; vice-chair, Mr Cousens; members, Messrs Charlton, Cleary, Henderson, Matrundola, Miclash, Philip, Miss Roberts, Mrs. E. J. Smith and Mr Villeneuve; clerk, Harold Brown.

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Parliamentary precinct: co-chairs, Hon Mr Edighoffer and Mr Epp; members, Mr Pouliot, Mrs Smith and Mr Villeneuve; clerk, Smirle Forsyth.

CONTENTS

Wednesday 2 May 1990

| | | |
|---|-----|--|
| Members' statements | | |
| Oshawa Generals | 971 | |
| Mr Breugh | | |
| Economic outlook | 971 | |
| Mr Pope | | |
| Earth Day | 971 | |
| Mr Adams | | |
| Health professions | 971 | |
| Miss Martel | | |
| Travel industry compensation fund | 972 | |
| Mr McLean | | |
| Landfill site | 972 | |
| Mrs Fawcett | | |
| Education financing | 972 | |
| Mr Kormos | | |
| Community service | 972 | |
| Mr Sterling | | |
| Northern power development | 973 | |
| Mr Miclash | | |
| Statements by the ministry | | |
| Social assistance | 973 | |
| Mr Beer | | |
| Travel industry compensation fund | 974 | |
| Mr Sorbara | | |
| Responses | | |
| Social assistance | 974 | |
| Mr Allen | | |
| Travel industry compensation fund | 975 | |
| Mr McLean | | |
| Social assistance | 975 | |
| Mrs Marland | | |
| Mr Jackson | | |
| Travel industry compensation fund | 975 | |
| Mr Jackson | | |
| Oral questions | | |
| Rent review | 975 | |
| Mr B. Rae | | |
| Mr Sweeney | | |
| Advocacy and guardianship | 976 | |
| Mr Reville | | |
| Mr Scott | | |
| Protection of in-care residents | 977 | |
| Mr Brandt | | |
| Mr Beer | | |
| Property Assessment Corp | 978 | |
| Mr Jackson | | |
| Mr Mancini | | |
| Municipal election investigation | 979 | |
| Mr Kormos | | |
| Mr Offer | | |
| Hospital beds | 979 | |
| Mr Eves | | |
| Mrs Caplan | | |
| St Regis Akwesasne reserve | 980 | |
| Mr Cleary | | |
| Mr Offer | | |
| Energy efficiency | 980 | |
| Mr Charlton | | |
| Mrs McLeod | | |
| Care for the disabled and elderly | 981 | |
| Mr J. M. Johnson | | |
| Mr Beer | | |
| Disabled persons | 981 | |
| Mr Dietsch | | |
| Ms Collins | | |
| Workers' compensation | 981 | |
| Miss Martel | | |
| Mr Phillips | | |
| Assistance to farmers | 982 | |
| Mr Villeneuve | | |
| Mr Ramsay | | |
| Telephone service | 982 | |
| Mr Kozyra | | |
| Ms Hart | | |
| Intervenor funding | 982 | |
| Mrs Grier | | |
| Mr Scott | | |
| Motion | | |
| Private members' public business | 983 | |
| Mr Elston | | |
| Withdrawn | 983 | |
| Petitions | | |
| Hospital beds | 984 | |
| Mr Eves | | |
| French-language services | 984 | |
| Mrs O'Neill | | |
| Reports by committees | | |
| Standing committee on public accounts | 984 | |
| Mr Philip | | |
| Adjourned | 984 | |
| Standing committee on social development | 984 | |
| Mrs O'Neill | | |
| Agreed to | 984 | |

First readings

| | |
|--|-----|
| Ontario Skeet Shooting Association Act, 1990, | |
| Bill Pr64 | 984 |
| Mr Cureatz | |
| Agreed to | 984 |
| Fraudulent Debtors Arrest Repeal Act, 1990, | |
| Bill 161 | 984 |
| Mr Scott | |
| Agreed to | 984 |
| Law Society Amendment Act (Insurance), 1990, | |
| Bill 164 | 984 |
| Mr Scott | |
| Agreed to | 984 |

Opposition Day

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Rent control, motion 2 | 985 |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | 985 |
| Mr Sweeney | 987 |
| Mr Philip | 990 |
| Mr Jackson | 990 |

| | |
|---------------------------|------|
| Mrs E. J. Smith | 995 |
| Mr Reville | 996 |
| Mr Mahoney | 997 |
| Mrs Grier | 999 |
| Ms Poole | 1000 |
| Mr B. Rae | 1001 |
| Mr Chiarelli | 1002 |
| Mr Pouliot | 1002 |
| Negatived | 1003 |

Other business

| | |
|---|------|
| Estimates | 971 |
| Mr Elston | |
| Members' anniversaries | 983 |
| Mr B. Rae | |
| Use of time in question period | 983 |
| Mr Sterling | |
| Response time | 983 |
| Mr Hampton | |
| Adjournment | 1003 |
| Alphabetical list of members | 1004 |

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Le mercredi 2 mai 1990

Déclaration ministérielle

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Aide sociale | 973 |
| M. Beer | |

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Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 3 May 1990

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 34^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Le jeudi 3 mai 1990



Speaker
Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers

Languages in Hansard

Hansard reports all debates in English or French as spoken by the participants. It does not translate remarks made in either language. Headings and tables of contents reflect language use.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents for proceedings reported in this issue appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve à l'arrière de ce fascicule, ainsi qu'une liste alphabétique de députés de l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au (416) 965-2159.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 3 May 1990

The House met at 1000.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

COMMERCIAL RENT PROTECTION

Ms Bryden moved resolution 1:

That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing that huge rent increases year after year are constituting a threat to the competitiveness and survival of retail business in commercial strips serving residential neighbourhoods, the government of Ontario should introduce legislation as soon as possible to regulate the rents for such business establishments in order to provide those businesses with protection from gouging landlords comparable to the protection given to tenants of residential rental premises under the Residential Rent Regulation Act, 1986.

The Deputy Speaker: According to standing order 94(c)(i), the honourable member has 10 minutes to make her presentation.

Ms Bryden: Mr Speaker, I would like to reserve three minutes of my time for rebuttal.

The Deputy Speaker: The member would already have two minutes at the end. You can use all 10 minutes now, if you want, and automatically you will have two minutes at the end.

Ms Bryden: What I am proposing in my resolution is that the principle of tenant protection be extended to occupiers of commercial premises. Rent regulation for commercial tenancies is essential to protect tenants from landlords who consider only what the traffic will bear. We regulate many other aspects of commercial activity to overcome the excesses of the market economy. For example, we try to stop unfair competition, manipulated stock markets, pollution of the environment and lack of health and safety standards.

We have observed how vulnerable operators of small businesses and retail stores on commercial strips are. These businesses provide a variety of essential services to adjacent neighbourhoods. Many of the operators of these businesses have been a part of their community for many years. Others have been newcomers to Canada who have found that opening a variety or milk store gave them a chance to start on the ladder to economic independence. Such people are at the mercy of landlords who consider only what the traffic will bear and ignore the value of location and ongoing goodwill in the community to a retailer. Often the landlord is a remote numbered company or a huge real estate firm with no understanding of the tenants' need for permanency and specialization to meet local needs.

I do not believe that all commercial landlords are unfair, but when circumstances permit abuses, I believe it is the job of legislators to introduce regulation to prevent that. I have in mind such matters as a maximum allowable annual increase, unless landlords can justify to an independent body that higher increases are needed to maintain the property in good repair.

Standard leases are another potential for legislation to eliminate unfair and unreasonable terms in leases. We also need a system of mediation by independent administrators with experience in the commercial rental field, both as landlords and tenants. We need an adequate appeal tribunal from the decisions of such administrators. We need, first, opening of the books by both parties so the mediation is conducted with all the information on both sides. This is done under residential rent review.

We need a prohibition of the pass-through of extra mortgage costs resulting from flips. We must stop tenants from being forced to pay for building owners speculating in buildings. We need a government which will enforce minimum standards of maintenance as part of a rent regulation law. We must also stop landlords from passing on municipal tax increases to tenants and writing this into their leases. It is unfair for commercial landlords to escape paying their share of municipal costs, since they benefit greatly from the services provided by local governments, police and fire protection, subsidized water and sewer services and things of that nature.

In my resolution I am concentrating first on legislation which would help the group most vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous landlords, those operating on commercial strips in cities. I know there is also serious exploitation of tenants of shopping plaza owners because of the nature of the shared-cost leases they sign, but that is a different kind of lease and it would likely require different legislation to protect those tenants.

Tenants on commercial strips are particularly in need of protection because they lack political instruments to lobby for protective laws. Their businessmen's associations are often weak. Due to the pressure of operating a small retail establishment or service business for ever-lengthening hours, they have little time to organize or to negotiate jointly with big, distant landlords. Moreover, their needs vary with the type of business, so their efforts at self-regulation of hours and competitive practices are fragmented.

Lack of commercial rent regulation leaves them like tenant farmers in underdeveloped countries, who are little more than slaves of greedy landlords who keep increasing rents. The commercial tenants can only keep afloat by opening for longer and longer hours, sometimes 24 hours a day, and employing more and more members of their immediate family and friends, who often moonlight with other jobs.

1010

Lack of provincial regulation of hours of opening and closing makes their lifestyle very stressful. Around-the-clock operation should be regulated to set minimum rules for protecting the safety of night-time workers. We should not add to our policing problems by allowing one person to mind the till alone in night-time hours.

One area in which tenants on commercial strips and other small businesses might find some help would be to explore co-op ownership of commercial premises on a strip. Then the tenants would be able to control their own rents and costs. They could develop common services for their operations, computerization of payroll, tax payments and inventory control. They could share contracts for cleaning and heating services and purchase of supplies.

The provincial government should be promoting this kind of co-op development and making seed grants available for startup of such co-ops. It could also encourage investors to build new commercial premises to lease to co-ops serving a particular area.

I have put my proposal in the form of a resolution today rather than a bill because I am pioneering in this field. The legislative library research service has checked rent regulation laws across Canada. It has found no province has yet ventured into the field of commercial rent regulation, but there is no reason why Ontario should not lead the way in establishing protection for its residents who are being exploited and have little power to fight back.

The library has found that the city of Berkeley in California had a commercial rent control ordinance on its books from 1982 to 1988. Unfortunately, the California State Legislature in 1988 put a ban on such local legislation. I would hope our government would not do the same if a municipality decided it needed rent regulation. After all, the people on the local scene know the situation and we can learn much from the experience of Berkeley, California.

I will urge the government to undertake a study of the whole question of the need for commercial rent regulation. I am also suggesting that the study report be referred to an all-party committee for public hearings and for the development of recommendations for legislative action in this field.

It is time that a caring society moved away from the law of the jungle to a fair system of rent regulation in both the commercial and the residential field. As my colleagues in the New Democratic Party demonstrated yesterday in the debate they initiated on the defects of the present Residential Rent Regulation Act, the government must go back to the drawing board and bring in genuine rent regulation for both residential tenants and commercial tenants.

Increases of over 100%, which are being allowed under the present Residential Rent Regulation Act, must be outlawed. At the same time we must start looking at the need for regulating commercial tenants. I urge all members of the Legislature to consider this exploratory resolution in which we will all learn from having public hearings on this proposal and then we will get the kind of legislation we need.

Mr Sterling: I think it is kind of ironic that today a member of the New Democratic Party, the member for Beaches-Woodbine—for whom I have a great deal of respect, who has served this Legislature for a long period of time and who, I understand, is not going to seek re-election next time we are called to the polls—would bring forward a resolution today to include retail stores in the rent review process, when only yesterday another member of the party with which she is associated, the New Democratic Party, had a resolution in this House condemning the government for the rent review legislation which is in place for residential tenancies, saying that the legislation is not working and that the government should scrap it, should go back to the books and start over again. I find that is a little bit contradictory in terms of what the member is trying to suggest today, that we go beyond residential units and into the business sector in trying to regulate leases between landlords and tenants in that case.

I also can say, in terms of representing our party, that we have a great ideological problem with going into the business community even further than the government is already into the business community. This present government, the Liberal government across the floor, has seen fit to try to introduce more and more regulations around businesses and has intro-

duced more and more taxes for businesses. The employer health tax is the most recent example. They introduced a bill in this House over a year ago which I have been fighting, Bill 149, which wants to tell retailers that they no longer have control over who they allow or do not allow in their stores. They tried to amend the Trespass to Property Act for even the little retail stores which the member for Beaches-Woodbine is talking about today. So I think business at the present time has a bellyful of regulation, a bellyful of government and the last thing it wants, in my view, is another interference by the government into its world.

The other thing which the member is not addressing or not thinking of with regard to this resolution is the fact that commercial leases often have a greater number of other variables than residential leases might have. Normally a residential lease only entails the renting of a particular spot in a building and perhaps the addition of a parking spot. In commercial leases, and particularly strip plazas, it is not uncommon for the landlord to strike a deal relating to a share of profits. It is not uncommon for the landlord to charge for some of the maintenance of the common area; in other words, for instance, asking each tenant in the strip plaza to contribute towards the cost of removing snow in the winter and of taking care of the parking lot during the summer. To try to enter into general regulations to cover all these areas, I would suggest, would be a nightmare in terms of government regulation.

Rent control was brought in in 1975 in this province, during a provincial election, probably hastily conceived, but over the past 15 years when rent control has attempted to protect tenants, I remain to be convinced that it in fact has had that effect over those 15 years. I suggest it would not be the small retailer who would be able to take advantage of increased government regulation, but the larger owners of various shopping malls who could take advantage of any regulations surrounding their particular enterprise.

We have seen this with regard to the residential situation. When the landlord wants to increase the rent, tenants in residential premises get a note which often says, "The government of Ontario has authorized an increase of 6.6% in your rent this year," or 4.2%, or whatever it is for that particular year. In other words, the landlord uses the government as a crutch to raise the rent.

1020

Quite frankly, right now there is probably a far greater abundance of retail space in the city of Metropolitan Toronto than there are tenants. One need only walk up and down Yonge Street and see virtually every third or fourth store empty at this time. I suggest that if in fact government regulation were involved, those tenants who are occupying stores at the present time would face constant increases, even though at the present time I believe tenants are being offered new leases at lower rents than they enjoyed prior to the renewal.

We have learned, or we hope we have learned from the rest of the world. The rest of the world, and I talk about eastern Europe, is moving away from governments trying to control the economy. Eastern Europe has learned that if government tries to own, control and run business, it does not work. I suggest that the New Democratic Party, as represented perhaps by the member for Beaches-Woodbine—I expect that it would support her resolution—is moving in an opposite direction in trying to move more regulation into the business world.

I believe small business must be protected from unscrupulous practices, but I also believe the spirit of business and

the whole essence of entrepreneurship requires business persons to make certain decisions and they must live by those decisions. I do not think the entering or the not entering into a lease, the moving of a person's store, or whether the person decides to sign a five-year lease, a 10-year lease or a two-year lease, should be left up to the government.

I think we will find during the next decade that government will withdraw from as many areas of regulation as it can as the world becomes more complex and we have to deal with more important issues like our environmental issues. We just do not have the time to try to run each and every part of everybody's lives. By the very essence of business and the people who are in business, they must live and die by some of the decisions they make.

We are satisfied that under the present supply and market system adequate retail space is being provided in Metro Toronto. In fact, probably there is an overabundance of retail space in the Toronto area. That is probably true right across Ontario. I do not think there is any necessity at the present time to interfere in that system, and we as a party would speak most strongly against this kind of move into the regulation of rents for the business sector.

Mr Carrothers: I am pleased to be joining in this debate. I want to indicate at the outset that I will not be supporting this resolution. I think the member is proposing a solution to a problem that does not exist. To the extent that it may exist, it exists only in some very small portions of the city of Toronto.

My opposition is based, first, on that fact that there is no need for this type of interference in the marketplace; second, as my colleague the member for Carleton has already indicated, I am not sure we could construct a process to control rents in the commercial area; third, and speaking perhaps now in my role as the small business advocate for the province of Ontario, I see no support, even among those whom this resolution is purporting to protect, for this type of interference.

Let me deal with each of those separately. The resolution begins by indicating that the House recognizes that huge rent increases year after year are constituting a threat to retail establishments in commercial plazas in Ontario.

The facts are quite different. The vacancy rate in the Toronto area, if we could use just that as an example, in commercial spaces right now is 8.8%. That is a far cry from the less than 1% that existed in 1975 when rent review was brought in for residential premises. In fact, it is even more interesting that in the downtown Toronto area that vacancy rate may drop to around 3%, but out in the suburban areas of Toronto it then increases above 10%. So as my colleague the member for Carleton has already indicated, there is a great deal of commercial space available; no shortage in the Toronto area.

If we look at the rental increases, since the premise is that there have been huge rent increases, we note that in the Toronto area the rent increases have averaged 10%, but if we break that down, again we note that the increases are steeper in downtown Toronto and as you move outwards they get down to 4% or less, less than the rate of inflation.

I can tell members that in my own community I see no shortage of space in our strip plazas for retail establishments. I certainly do not see any shortage as I travel about the province. I think many of the members, if they reflect on their own ridings, will recognize the fact that there does not appear to be any shortage even on that subjective or anecdotal test. I do not think it is appropriate to impose a solution on the entire province of Ontario for a problem that may only exist on certain streets within downtown Toronto.

In addition, I am not sure how you could construct a rent review process for commercial leases. As my colleague the member for Carleton has already indicated, a commercial lease is quite a different animal from a residential lease. A residential lease is a very simple contract: You live in the space and you pay money for being there. Sometimes the only debate is over who is going to mow the lawn, if it is a house, or perhaps who might pay the taxes. But in a commercial lease there is a great deal of variation. You can take a proportion of your profits as rent, as my colleague the member for Carleton has already indicated, you can be paying part of the common expenses of the commercial space or any number of things. I suspect that any creative lawyer or accountant could devise any number of new ways to extract revenue from a commercial tenant and get around any attempt to regulate rents in the manner that we do for residential tenancies.

Because the member seems to be implying that we should start with reviewing rents or controlling rents in commercial strip plazas, I have a great deal of difficulty understanding how we would define that, how we would live out of the commercial marketplace that type of premise on which to construct a review process. I think we all recognize that perhaps at the extremes it is easy to determine what a commercial strip plaza is. Obviously the Toronto-Dominion Bank building is not a strip plaza, and we recognize that the stores that exist on the streets of the member's riding probably are, but what is a shopping centre? It has most of the facets of a strip plaza, the only difference being that the parking is separated from the stores. What about the shopping plazas that are opening up which have parking right in front of the stores? Are those strip plazas? Are we going to control those? I think it would be very difficult to come up with a definition of precisely what it was you were wanting to control that could not again be got around simply by changing the nature or the design or the structure of the premises.

I mentioned that I do not sense any support in the business community, particularly among the retailers, for this type of move. As I indicated, I am the small business advocate for the province and in that role am often speaking with many small business people around the province, particularly retailers. I have yet to have anyone mention to me the desire for rent controls.

In fact, if we look at the groups that speak for these groups, like for instance the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, which purports to have 92,000 members in the small business community, it is on record as opposing any type of rent controls, which includes that in commercial spaces. The Retail Council of Canada and the Retail Merchants Association of Canada, both of which speak for retailers, have no particular position, so they obviously do not even feel there is a problem here. As I have said before, I have not found, except perhaps in the downtown Toronto area, any mention of rents as a problem within our small business community.

As the problem, if it does exist, does seem to be limited to some streets in downtown Toronto, and perhaps particularly it is impacting on stores within the member's riding, which is a downtown Toronto riding, I would make the observation that commercial spaces and the construction of them are very sensitive to planning and permit-issuing practices of municipalities. Perhaps the difficulty here might be with the city of Toronto itself and the fact that it is not allowing these premises to be created at the rate they need to be. If there is any solution, or if there is a solution for the member's constituents, it may well lie with some streamlining or some greater level of activity in the

city of Toronto itself in order to permit more of these premises to exist in her riding. It seems to me from any indication I have, both looking at the figures across this province, as I have indicated, or speaking to business people across this province, if there is a problem in this area, it is limited to downtown Toronto.

In summary, as I indicated, I will not be supporting this resolution. I do not think there is any need for it. I do not think that, even if you wanted to move into this area, you could construct a review process that would adequately or properly protect commercial tenants. I think there would be too many ways to get around that by virtue of the fact that commercial leases are so varied one from the other.

Finally, I do not sense and have not heard, and if I look at the official positions of the spokespeople for the small business community, particularly the retail community, I do not see any support or demand for this type of move in the province of Ontario. For all of those reasons, I will not be supporting this resolution.

1030

Mr Morin-Strom: I am pleased to stand in support of my colleague's resolution before the Legislature today.

The member for Beaches-Woodbine has distinguished herself over the years in her fighting for the interests of those constituents in her riding and for those constituents across the province who are facing difficulties in facing up to the powerful interests of government and the private sector.

In this case, we are looking at the desire to do something about those small family-operated businesses that have been put at a tremendous disadvantage in competing in the marketplace in Ontario in recent years. It used to be that the family-operated corner store was a hallmark of small-town Ontario as well as a vital element of neighbourhoods in the bigger cities, including the city of Toronto. More and more, it has become difficult for the small business, the family-operated business, to survive in today's marketplace.

Certainly the government has been of little assistance in supporting the small business sector, as the government continues to put its emphasis on the larger corporate enterprises. The relationship between this government, this Liberal government, and the development industry in particular has been well established and has been the subject of serious investigation. Unfortunately, this government has stifled those investigations and in fact brought them to a halt as a result of its mishandling of the Starr investigation, the inadequacies of the terms of reference for that investigation and the resulting Supreme Court decision.

It is incumbent upon this government to look at the treatment of the small business sector by the development industry, and this government's involvement in supporting the major developers surely must be related to its opposition to this particular resolution.

We know that, more and more, the opportunity for small family businesses to be able to exist in Ontario is dependent upon their being able to contract with the kinds of commercial strip operations on streets and neighbourhoods of the larger communities that this resolution addresses. The type of monopoly situation that individual developers are able to obtain in a given neighbourhood by buying up the commercial space and then forcing tenants to be subject to negotiation in a David and Goliath type of relationship surely leaves those family businesses vulnerable.

The member has not presented here a detailed package of legislation, but instead has proposed, I think very wisely at this point, a resolution which would state the intent of this House that such legislation should come forward and this government should be embarking on a process to ensure that family-operated businesses have the opportunity to get fair and reasonable access to rental space and that the government of Ontario step in to regulate those operations so that the treatment of the family-operated business would be a fair one in the marketplace.

We do regulate as a province many aspects of commercial activity to overcome the excesses of the market economy. There are regulations even on larger businesses when one looks at the stock market. We have regulations on health and safety. We have regulations on unfair competition. The one group that lacks the power to negotiate fairly is the smaller retailers on small commercial strips. They are very often at the mercy of their landlords, who can charge exorbitant rates, and they are left vulnerable when new lease agreements come up.

When a family-operated business has established itself in an area and has developed a reputation and a clientele, surely it is not fair that the landlord should be able to arbitrarily increase those rents at the end of a lease to exorbitant levels and take away all opportunity for that family to be able to operate a business that would be profitable and enable them to support themselves in the business that they have developed over the years.

Unfortunately, when it comes to small business operations, this government has not provided the support that it should have. We still have effective tax rates which are much higher for the small business sector than for large corporations. We have had a government that has done nothing about the most serious problem facing small business, and that is the current high interest rate policy and the general mistreatment of the small business sector by our large banks here in Canada.

Surely this is an area where some government regulation should come forward that would be to the benefit of family-oriented businesses and would give them the opportunity to continue to operate in the interests of local communities, providing services that they have over the years, and give the opportunity for new immigrants particularly coming into various areas of the province who have had experience in operating their own family enterprises elsewhere to bring that experience and be able to enter into their own operations, start up their own businesses and provide new services in communities right across this province.

I would ask members of this Legislature to look very closely at what has been proposed here. Surely we can support some government regulation that will provide some protection for this vital small business community.

Mr Charlton: The government members here today seem to be much like the Treasurer and the Minister of Revenue and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology—with their eyes closed.

We have reached a stage in Ontario where we have to decide what we want our future to be. Each of us who grew up in this province has watched the nature of small business in this province change dramatically over the course of the last 30 years. If what we want is to eventually see the virtual death and disappearance of truly independent small business, if what we want to see is the total, absolute domination of the small business sector by chains and franchises, then we can continue to keep our eyes closed. We can continue to keep our heads in the

sand and ignore the problems that exist out there in the small business community.

1040

This resolution by the member for Beaches-Woodbine is about independent small business. It is about, as has been suggested, strip stores, strip malls, commercial streets, if you like, like College Street here or like Concession Street in my own riding in Hamilton.

On streets like that, you see cycles of real estate activity, the same as we do throughout the rest of the real estate market. You see speculation occur. You see down cycles when the street is not very popular. You see upgrades occur. Some businesses survive those cycles; others do not.

Usually those that survive the down cycles are those small businesses that not only attract customers from outside the community but those small businesses that genuinely serve the community where that commercial street exists. They are the ones that survive the down cycles when that street is not a very popular commercial area. But those are the very same small businesses that get gobbled up as a result of real estate speculation and dramatic rent increases as a result of the rehabilitation of a commercial area.

We often hear comments when the government is announcing particular programs to assist small business about the high rate of business failure for small businesses. It is interesting, though, that we do not have any significant studies of the real causes of those business failures, and if you sit down and spend some time talking, as I have over the course of the last couple of years, to businesses that are closing, especially in strip situations like the ones dealt with in this resolution, you find that although it may not be the total cause, in many cases significant rent increases as the result of the redevelopment of an area, regardless of whether there has been a redevelopment of a particular property or not, often play a major part in the business closing.

As I suggested when I started my comments, we in this province can either keep our heads in the sand and ignore what is happening to truly independent small business in Ontario, or we can start to do some of the things that really support independent small business. If we really want to choose to have nothing left in the small business sector but chains and franchises, if we truly do not appreciate anything that is really independent, so be it, but let's stand up and say so instead of saying we support the small, independent family business but ignoring the plight of those businesses and ensuring their eventual demise.

This resolution is just a small part of an attempt to start dealing with the questions that affect those who in the small business sector represent those comparable to the poor and the unfortunate we try to deal with in the housing sector when we talk about rent review or rent control and when we talk about affordable housing and non-profit housing. The truly family-operated small independent business is the small business at the low end of the economic ladder, and we have to either decide we have given up on any future for them, which I am not prepared yet to do, or start to sit down and look at the things that seriously impact on them, like uncontrolled rent increases, and attempt to deal with the questions that will help those businesses survive.

I hope that members will support this resolution. As my colleague from Sault Ste Marie said, it is a resolution that expresses the intent of this House to try to assist small independent business around the question of rent and we would like

to see the passage of this resolution so that there can be some work done on this problem by the government, an area around which it has never done any serious work or analysis to determine the true and full extent of the impact that rents have on small business.

Mr Velshi: I was not scheduled to be speaking here today, but I thought, given the extra time that is available, I might as well put my two cents' worth into the debate.

At the outset, I have to say that I am opposed to this resolution. The only thing I like about this resolution is that yesterday the opposition party spent half a day speaking against the rent review process that is in place in Ontario, how bad it was and how terrible it was.

Mr Dietsch: That was yesterday.

Mr Velshi: That was yesterday. But today the member for Beaches-Woodbine states in her resolution that we should provide small businesses with "protection from gouging landlords comparable to the protection given to tenants of residential rental premises under the Residential Rent Regulation Act, 1986." Perhaps that is the only thing I can agree with here in this resolution, that the residential rent act is doing something good, and I think the NDP members have to accept that.

One problem is that the member for Beaches-Woodbine seems to feel that Toronto is the centre of the universe, that everything that is happening here happens everywhere else. Toronto is not even the centre of Ontario, if I may say so. If you look at the smaller towns and villages in Ontario, drive by and it is really depressing to see that in every block of shops there are three or four stores that are vacant with "To Rent" signs on them. When you look at the strip plazas in these little towns—most of these strip plazas do not have large Eaton Centres in smaller towns and in cities across this province—at the end of one strip plaza you probably have a large anchor store, the Dominion type of a store. If we give protection to these tenants, is the member for Beaches-Woodbine suggesting that we give protection to these large anchor stores, the very stores that they have been fighting against in terms of price increases of food stuffs?

I think it would be a mistake even to discuss this question of protecting the tenants of smaller stores, because the only places where we have larger stores in strip plazas are out of the main centres of Ontario, of Toronto. We would be protecting those very same people whom she is planning on not protecting for the rest of the time that she is here.

I say that even in Kingston, a fairly large city, you drive through the town and you find empty stores there. So whom are we trying to protect there? Even the landlords in the smaller places are not big, big landlords like we have in Metro Toronto. They are small, family people also.

I think it is important to know that everything that happens in Metro Toronto is not what happens in the smaller areas of Ontario. Quite often I see members from the opposition parties standing up talking about northern Ontario and eastern Ontario not getting sufficient support from us. Here, the very thing that the member for Beaches-Woodbine is trying to do is going to negate the very statements they make in terms of supporting the north and eastern Ontario. For that reason, I think perhaps the member for Beaches-Woodbine should think twice before bringing in such a resolution, which is going to hurt the very people that she intends protecting.

1050

The Acting Speaker (Mr Cureatz): Casting my eyes about and seeing no further participation in the debate, I would like to bring all members' attention to the fact that the honourable member for Beaches-Woodbine has approximately a minute left of her party's allocation of time, her own two minutes for windup comments, plus a further—I look to the table—five minutes approximately left in terms of what has been accumulated between the third party and the governing party. That being the case, do I have unanimous consent to allow the honourable member to use up all the necessary time until the next order of business?

Agreed to.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Beaches-Woodbine, then, until approximately 11 o'clock.

Ms Bryden: I thank the other members for giving unanimous consent to enable me to use the remaining time. Since each of the other parties was able to find only one speaker, I am surprised that they reject the guts of my resolution, which is that we should have a study of the question and find out whether there really is a problem out there and whether small business is suffering from abuses.

I have certainly heard of many cases where small businesses were forced out of their long-term locations, either by the increases in rent, the combination of increases in rent and passing on taxes or the failure to maintain adequate maintenance to keep the building operational. But we do not really know what the situation is, and that is all I am asking for, a study by an all-party committee with public hearings to find out where the problems are.

I know there are abuses. As I say, I have met retailers and small businesses, not only on the Danforth but in all parts of my riding, with problems of this sort, being forced out of locations that have been not only permanent, in the sense that they built up a community business, but have also suited the particular special needs of that community.

What is wrong with the members who have spoken finding out about this situation is that all of the three who spoke against this cited only hearsay, as to there was no problem. They were burying their heads in the sand, saying there is no problem. They have not looked. I think this is the reason why we should recommend to the government that it go ahead and find out what the abuses are and look at its obligation to see that those abuses are eliminated.

We all know that it is a David and Goliath situation in most rent negotiations between landlords and tenants, that there is no mediation service for commercial tenants and that they are simply at the mercy of the landlords. The landlords are often remote people. They are numbered companies, they are high-priced real estate agencies with multitudes of properties throughout the city and managers to try to get the greatest amount of money out of the tenants. They know the tenants are weak and they know that, even though there are vacant stores, they are not suitable for a business that has been there for many years carrying on its service to the community. It is really a question of protecting many small businesses and retailers who are located in cities mainly, trying to service neighbourhoods and trying to carry on the activities that those neighbourhoods really cherish.

I feel that the speakers from the other parties are showing their ignorance of the problem and are not willing to have public hearings and an all-party committee to get recommenda-

tions from the people who are affected so that we can decide whether this is a subject for a government to consider regulating commercial rent.

Some of the members have mentioned that yesterday's debate in the House on the New Democratic Party opposition day motion was on the subject of residential rent review. We were criticizing that the present residential rent review has many, many defects in it. Actually, it is a product of both the Conservative and Liberal governments, arrived at after a long series of discussions and meetings between the landlords, tenants and other groups. But we have had three years' experience with it now—it came in in 1986—and we have found that it is absolutely not the answer to residential rent regulation in this province. That is why we made it the subject of an opposition day motion and debated it all afternoon yesterday.

I will say that our party voted against that 1986 act for residential rent regulation because we felt it was inadequate then, that it was too loaded in the sense of favouring the landlords over the tenants. History has proved, in the last three years, that it is loaded for landlords and against tenants. It still allows the pass-through of mortgage costs when a flip occurs over a very short period. Then when that period is up, there may be another flip, and again there will be a big change in mortgage and other costs and there will be additional costs loaded on to the existing tenants.

Then if the landlord decides he wants to renovate, as he is allowed to do under the present act with no restriction on how much renovation he can decide he should put in, and with no restriction on how much tenants should pay for those renovations or how quickly he should be able to charge them through, and no definition of really what a renovation is, we found that landlords are just driving trucks through the present act.

I am not advocating that the present Residential Rent Regulation Act be a model for commercial rent regulation. I am suggesting that we need a committee to find out what is the proper model and that we need action by the existing Liberal government to show that it is aware there are abuses in the residential field and that it is ready to clean up that act and bring in new legislation in the residential field as well.

They must amend the legislation that has been allowing increases to landlords of over 100 per cent, sometimes 200 per cent. This is simply no protection to tenants. They must stop requiring tenants to pay for renovations they do not want, and they must prevent tenants from paying over and over again for new renovations or being forced out by the increases in their rents resulting from the extra costs of unwanted renovations.

We found that there is a great need for definitions in the new residential act and that the appeal process is inadequate. Many tenants' groups have organized, hired lawyers and tried to make their case as to why they should be allowed to have a cap put on any increases. There already is, we know, an allowable increase each year. It was 4.7% last year, I think, or maybe 4.6%, but that allowable increase should be our form of rent regulation. It has been arrived at by the ministry as a reasonable increase in costs, on the average, that the market seems to indicate, but it has been entirely ignored by the action of landlords in using those clauses in the act where they can pass through costs that should not be passed through, because those costs arise mainly from land speculation.

1100

The tenants also should be protected from huge increases in rents because there is no other place for most of them to go. That is due to the actions of the landlords in flipping buildings,

attempting to renovate buildings or attempting to get vacant possession of buildings, often by very unscrupulous and sometimes illegal activities. It used to be known as blockbusting and now it appears to be apartment-vacating tactics.

Certainly I am not condoning the present Residential Rent Regulation Act, even though it is mentioned in my resolution as the present situation. What I am saying is that we need to look at new legislation for both residential and commercial tenancies and that we also need to study the question. I am really shocked that the members of this House are not prepared to consider a study, that they say, "We don't know if it's a problem anywhere except Metropolitan Toronto." We had speakers from our party, from Sault Ste Marie and from Hamilton, who know the same problems are existing there, the same exploitation of commercial tenants.

In my own riding I had a non-profit advocacy group for Italian-speaking residents—there are a good number of them in my riding—which had operated in the same premises, providing counsel on workers' compensation, pensions, disabilities, taxes and all that sort of thing for Italian-speaking people. They were forced out of their Danforth Avenue location, where they had been for many years, by a two-month notice of a tripling of their rent. It took them six months to find another place to move to. They had to put their furniture into storage and suspend operations. They finally found a place with double the rent that they were paying before, or more than double, but there is no other place they can find if they wish to keep on operating. At the same time, their grants from the bodies that support them—city, Metro, federal and provincial grants for a very valuable service to the Italian-speaking community—have not been increased to allow for the three-time increase in their rent anywhere in the area that they serve.

We are hurting non-profit groups like that. We are hurting small businesses that have been in the area for years and have performed a very important function in those areas and provide variety for people who shop.

CONSTRUCTION SITE WASHROOM FACILITIES

Ms Oddie Munro moved resolution 43:

That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing that the current practice of the construction industry regarding the provision of sanitary and toilet facilities for construction workers is outdated, the Ministry of Labour should make appropriate amendments to regulation 691 of RRO 1980 under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to upgrade the minimum requirements for sanitary and toilet facilities on construction sites, and in particular should amend the regulations to require employers to provide flush toilets and hand-washing facilities (including soap and running water) at all construction sites and to provide separate facilities for each sex at sites where male and female workers are present.

The Acting Speaker: I would like to advise the member that she has allocated to her an X amount of time, of which she might want to reserve some portion besides the two minutes available to her for winding up.

Ms Oddie Munro: To the viewing audience, and perhaps to some members of the Legislature, it may come as a shock to learn that in one of the largest revenue-generating and employment sectors in this province, the construction sector, workers are being denied the basic right accorded workers in other sectors: the right to provision of appropriate minimum requirement

for washroom facilities, the right to running hot and cold water, the right to flush toilets, the right to soap, the right to separated and protected units based on accepted hygiene and operating practices and including the provision for separate facilities for men and women.

The needed legislative provision is within the Occupational Health and Safety Act, as an amendment to regulation 691 of RRO 1980 with section 89 recognized as being a minimal standard.

The struggle to obtain provisions has been on the agenda of the building trades for many years, most notably following the introduction of RRO 1980. The originator of formal recommendations from a local union to the provincial Ministry of Labour was in fact the Hamilton-Brantford Ontario Building and Construction Trades council. In a letter dated 10 March 1987 to the then Minister of Labour, Fred Wilson, business manager, Plumbers and Pipe Fitters, Local 67, Hamilton, speaking on behalf of the Hamilton-Brantford building trades council, detailed concerns for the health of construction workers occasioned by the use of outdated sanitary facilities, including lack of washup facilities. In that letter he requested an investigative visit of a major construction site to view first hand existing and substandard facilities.

This visit, by a medical consultant of the ministry, took place in April 1987 at the request of construction health and safety branch. Advice on this report included comments confirming the possible spread of enteric pathogens and the need for appropriate hygiene, including soap and running water, and the observation that such minimal standards were not available. An observation that the site in question was not satisfactory in terms of cleanliness and sanitary conditions followed.

Similar informal actions were taken by the trades in the Brantford-Hamilton area during 1988. On 25 February 1989, the health and sanitation committee of the Hamilton-Brantford Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council, chaired by Mr Wilson, submitted to the Hamilton-Brantford construction trades annual meeting a resolution that the council approach the Hamilton-Wentworth labour-management health and safety committee to forward its concerns to the Provincial Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee as they related to washroom facilities and that the labour-management committee lobby the provincial government to amend section 89 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act regulation for construction projects.

Detailed guidelines governing the number of units per workers, requirements for flush toilets, wash basins, urinals, separate facilities, access to work site, protection of the worker, lighting, toilet paper, disinfectant, toilet seat and covers, heat and ventilation were also included. In addition, where workplace hazardous materials information system class products were used washroom facilities meeting the requirements of the applicable material safety data sheets were to be provided.

This resolution was passed unanimously during the 1988 and 1989 annual meeting. Such resolutions were subsequently submitted and passed at the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario annual meetings.

The Provincial Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee, a joint committee, in consultation with the construction health and safety branch, Ministry of Labour, has been in receipt of the resolution and proposed amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act and regs since that time and is currently working on a proposed amendment and guideline.

Labour, management and the Ministry of Labour all feel that it is timely, given the major reform in Bill 208, to include such amendments under that legislation. However, there has been some concern expressed by management, consisting of employer representatives and members of the construction associations of Ontario, that the amendment for universal minimum requirements may not be practicable given the wide range of construction sectors, differences in size of project, location, labour movement, specialization and diversification. I certainly urge the committee to work towards speedy resolution so that it in fact can be incorporated in legislation brought to the House.

With us today in the member's east gallery is Tom Casey, business manager of the Hamilton-Brantford building trades council, and Fred Wilson, vice-president of council and business manager, Plumbers and Pipe Fitters, Hamilton. Their presence here today during a time of provincial labour negotiations in the construction building trades is testimony to the importance of this resolution, which I acknowledge as having been framed with their consultation and advice.

As an aside, I should also mention that the building trades have included in their collective agreement the amending legislation in process.

Over the years, individual worker complaints have not been treated seriously. They have been regarded as insignificant, as a joke. Equally, arguments against the provision of flush toilets relating to the lack of sanitary sewers to connect to or the competitive nature of the industry reflect a lack of priority and seriousness which can only be resolved through amendment to the legislation. Research and development is scarce, but it does exist.

In contrast, the occupational health and safety regulations for industrial work sites have clearly delineated guidelines. Construction sites, however, do not. Even more ludicrous, construction projects on industrial sites are not even accorded the same conditions and facilities.

1110

Surely in today's increasingly advanced technological society, with flush toilets being in existence for well over two centuries and with the construction sector responsible for the shape of our cities, roads and waterfront, we should have the knowhow to connect already serviced sites to washroom units. Johnny-on-the-Spots on megabuck projects are an example of basic values and knowledge being ignored or denied.

The next time members drive by a construction site they should think about the workers, the seasonal conditions, the spread of disease, the transfer to family members and the possible deaths from accumulated and long-time exposure to unhealthy conditions. They should think about chemical toilets and what we can do about it. For once, let's see an amendment without Workers' Compensation Board evidence, without numbers of deaths or chronic illness and without the need for pulling workers off job sites in protest. In short, let's hope the provincial labour-management amendment speaking to the need is passed in this Legislature.

I know I will run out of time, but I will refer to research evidence. Social mores—and certainly construction workers are no different than others—have often felt it not important enough or not macho enough to fight for, given the importance of job retention. The lack of sanitary facilities has become part of what one had to accept. Only recently have trades councils and local unions started to insist that change be made with no recrimination and no prejudice intended, just basic hygiene and health rights, prevention of disease for workers.

The body of evidence and study on the incidence of industrial disease on construction sites, epidemiological impact or acquisition by family members is largely non-existent due to the lack of benchmark cases submitted to and decisions rendered by occupational health and safety committees, industrial disease panels or WCB.

The reasons for this vary, but can be attributed to the heretofore cyclical or seasonal nature of construction, ie, the shorter length of time on a given project versus long-term employment on a single industrial site. In addition, the complex nature and specialization of work on construction sites has made it difficult to track work-relatedness within categories. There are in fact at least 10 clearly distinguishable categories of job sites: industrial, institutional, high-rise and low-rise, commercial, residential, public works, demolition, renovation, diving, tunnelling and work in compressed air environments.

Common sense combined with knowledge of occupational health and safety legislation, public health guidelines, etc, as applied to the food service, hospital, manufacturing, industrial and corporate sector suggest discrimination against construction workers in failing to provide flush toilets and running water, soap, disinfectant, disposable towels, washup facilities and separate facilities for male and female.

In contrast, hygiene in the school setting, in offices, restaurants and homes is stressed and accepted by those involved. Even Dear Abby stresses that washing one's hands after using rest rooms and before eating is acceptable and done. Mothers constantly and consistently tell their children not to eat food unless they wash their hands and not to touch their mouths or faces or other parts of their bodies if they have an illness. Good old-fashioned soap has proven to be much more effective than chemical wipes.

So research methodology does exist for examining the incidence of disease, as I mentioned before, for the latency, the incubation period and the compound risk factors, such as individuals' differences in health, immunology, etc, but there is, once again, lack of data. Regulations do not clearly apply and precedents for procedures in filling a claim out for compensation are not yet set. None the less, evidence is accumulated, and I will refer to that after I give other members a chance to speak.

I would urge members to take part in the discussion. I would like to officially recognize the resolution put forward by my colleague the member for Hamilton East and I am sure he will be speaking to the issue. I am looking forward to listening to the suggestions of the House. Again, I am confident and hopeful that the Ministry of Labour and the joint management committee listen to what is going on under this particular hour of business.

Mr Mackenzie: I am pleased to rise and speak in support of the resolution that has been moved by the member for Hamilton Centre. I think there are a number of things that should be said.

First off, the labour movement, the construction trades have been pushing for more adequate washroom and toilet facilities for better than 10 years, and they have been pushing hard. It would appear that in the last four to five years they have further stepped up the campaign and have made a number of presentations arguing their case. I know also it has been discussed by the labour-management committee. Indeed, I believe they will be bringing down a number of specific recommendations shortly.

The only fault I have with the resolution of the member for Hamilton Centre is that it is general enough that it will only take minimum improvements in the present standards to comp-

ly, to use her words, "To upgrade the minimum requirements for sanitary and toilet facilities on construction sites, and in particular should amend the regulations to require employers to provide flush toilets and hand-washing facilities."

The one positive improvement in the member's resolution is the provision of separate facilities at sites where both male and female workers are present. At the moment, that does not include too many sites, according to my information, but I think it is a positive step.

The reason that I obviously liked my own resolution is that it more clearly spelled out the minimum standards that are necessary. It is based on a resolution that was passed at the convention of the building trades and forwarded to me by the provincial building trades council. My resolution, simply stated, says:

"That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing that the current regulations covering hygiene on construction sites are outdated and in need of amendment; that requirements for the provision of toilet and washroom facilities should be fully reflected in the regulations of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (sections 89 and 90); and that the requirements should be both practical and workable, result in the improvement of job-site working conditions, and hence improve productivity on construction job sites in the province.

"1. The owner-constructor-project manager shall provide toilet and washing facilities on all construction sites in accordance with the following: (a) where there are 15 or more workers on a project for a minimum period of one month, the facilities shall include one flush (non-chemical) toilet and one urinal and one basin; and (b) for each additional 30 workers or part thereof, an additional flush toilet, urinal and washbasin shall be added to facilities.

"2. The costs borne by the owner-constructor-project manager in meeting the responsibilities of sections 89 and 90 cannot be transferred to other subcontractors-forces on the project.

"3. The owner-constructor-project manager shall have the option of providing the necessary facilities via access to facilities existing or adjacent to the work site; via temporary fixed facilities constructed on the site; or via mobile units, conditional on site services being available."

Before I read the short balance of my particular resolution, I might say that the costs are not exorbitant, according to information I have. The technology has existed for some time. Trailer units with generators, water heaters and up-to-date and comfortable facilities are available and some contractors are already using them. I am told that they are used but I am not sure if it is all sites. Eastern Construction and Foundation are but two examples.

It should also be pointed out that the need for the facilities is only as long as or until they can move to the facilities that may be onsite in the particular construction project. Unfortunately, some major construction outfits are still getting away with the Johnny-on-the-Spots, and even more disgusting, the low-boys, which do not have much favour with workers on construction sites.

I think the balance of my resolution also clearly outlines a more positive direction:

"4. On high-rise projects, the necessary facilities should be made available on every fourth floor.

"5. The toilet facilities provided shall be equipped as follows: (a) within easy access of work sites; (b) built so that the occupant is shielded from view and protected from weather and falling objects; (c) provided with natural or artificial lighting;

(d) provided with sufficient toilet paper and disinfectant; (e) kept in a clean and sanitary condition; (f) supplied with toilet seats and covers; (g) heated to a minimum of 18 degrees C; (h) suitably ventilated.

"6. Basins provided shall have as a minimum standard (a) hot and cold running water, (b) soap or hand cleaner, (c) hand towels."

There is an additional section that I think is vital to this particular resolution:

"90(1). (a) Where WHMIS-class products are present on the job site, washing facilities meeting the requirements of the applicable material safety data sheets shall be provided. (b) If showers (with the exception of safety showers) are required, they shall have as a minimum standard (a) hot and cold running water, (b) soap or hand cleaner, (c) paper towels or individual hand towels."

1120

I might say that a resolution being passed which would spell out the standards required would be one that I, and I think most construction workers, would be much more comfortable with than a resolution that does little more than say that we want to improve the minimum standards that currently exist.

However, my colleagues and I, as I indicated earlier, will be supporting the resolution of the government member. We have learned, unfortunately, that this government moves very slowly and with tiny steps when it comes to improvements in labour legislation in Ontario.

The question that has to be asked is why they have taken so long on something that could be done so easily, so quickly and really so cheaply. Who has resisted the improvements? Not the workers; that is obvious. They have been better than 10 years pushing for these relatively simple-to-accomplish changes in the facilities that they have on a construction site.

Who then has been the holdup? I might point out that this government itself has also now been in power for five years and that ties in with the accelerated push that has been conducted by the construction industry to try and achieve the facilities that they need.

Finally, and I think this is a real concern of workers, when will the new regulations be in place and will they be enforced? The record of enforcement of this government, whether it is health and safety, employment standards or a number of provisions of the labour legislation in Ontario, is not a good one. Heaven forbid that I even raise it, but should this government be fortunate enough to get a majority in another election, will we even see the legislation and the enforcement? We had a number of other promises that have not been carried through.

Let's hope that we do see these regulations—and I hope that they are adequate and not just an improvement in minimal standards—coming down, even if they come down as recommendations from the joint labour-management committee, and being put in place, and being put in place before we have an election call. That is the minimum that we hope for in this House, and it is because of that hope and desire that we will be supporting the resolution as it currently exists.

Mr Sterling: I have some difficulty in understanding why a resolution like this has to come to the Legislature for debate during private members' hour. I would have thought that a decision like this, if economically sound, would have followed the normal course and a regulation would have been passed by the government to improve these kinds of facilities on construction sites.

As a civil engineer who worked on a number of construction sites before returning to school some time ago, I can attest to the problem that is raised by the member, and I suppose it is a serious problem for a number of workers in this province. We in this party have no difficulty in supporting the resolution. Unfortunately, we are not presented with any statistics as to the increased costs that would be incurred in construction in general across the province in providing these facilities.

I am not aware of the technical ability to provide this and the overall trouble with installing these kinds of facilities on construction sites, but I would have thought that kind of information and those facts would have been brought to a committee and that the Ministry of Labour would then take the appropriate action. I just find it hard, when we heading into an election, to understand that this kind of an issue would be at the top of the list for the member for Hamilton Centre. Perhaps it is of more interest in her constituency than it is in mine.

At any rate, I think it is really a matter to be decided not by legislators on this floor, but in fact that a government that is acting responsibly would have taken care of this without having it brought to the floor by one of its own government members.

Mrs O'Neill: I am pleased to rise this morning to participate in the debate on the resolution put forward by my colleague the member for Hamilton Centre regarding the provision of sanitary and toilet facilities for construction workers in Ontario, facilities that will ensure that all persons working on construction sites have access to hygienic washroom facilities.

I first became interested in this issue as a result of a letter I received from a very dedicated woman in my riding, Lee Farnworth, who is the co-ordinator of technology and trade programs for women at Algonquin College in Ottawa. Therefore, I am most surprised that the member for Carleton does not find this item of interest in his riding.

I will quote briefly from Ms Farnworth's letter:

"It is time for improvement to toilet facilities on construction sites. Flush toilets, urinals and washbasins are not unreasonable demands. Indeed, these should be available to all employees in all places of work. Proper locks and regular inspection of toilet facilities would ensure that all who use such facilities could look forward to decent conditions. These are improvements that are timely and will go a long way towards providing a less hostile environment to women entering the construction trades."

That was the plea of Ms Farnworth. It is my belief and hope that flush toilets and hot water for hand-washing provisions to facilitate personal comfort and privacy should be mandatory on all work sites of Ontario's workforce.

As well as providing these facilities for hand washing, there is the issue of minimum standards of maintenance and cleanliness. Provisions must be made for maintaining facilities in a sanitary and safe condition at all times.

Although changes of this nature are of benefit to all workers on construction sites, they are particularly relevant to women. Between 1975 and 1985, there was a 64% increase in the number of women in construction work across this province. Women now make up over 10% of those employed in the construction industry. The provision of these facilities on construction sites would require an amendment to section 89 of the regulations for construction projects.

I believe that present-day technology would make it not only possible but indeed uncomplicated to provide vastly improved sanitary facilities throughout Ontario's construction industry. This practice is not unknown. As Pope John Paul II made his way across our country in 1984, adequate sanitary

facilities were established at each site and in fact hospital emergency room environments were in each location, with all facilities for sterilization and intensive lighting, everything necessary for first-class first aid service. The technology is there. What we need now is the political will to use it for the workers of this province.

The will is there. The Ontario women's directorate and the Ministry of Labour are both concerned about this issue and, as has been mentioned, the Provincial Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee is at this present moment considering all of these issues. The dialogue between labour and management at this time will hopefully result in amendments to legislation that will provide facilities which address the needs of male and female workers in the construction industry.

At present, the main issue under discussion is the provision of flush toilets and washing facilities on the sites. Whether to have separate toilets for women is an issue that has not yet been addressed. I strongly believe this is an issue that must be addressed. The current practices in the construction industry with regard to provision of sanitary and toilet facilities are clearly outdated. The lack of separate facilities for women creates a less than comfortable and convenient environment, and this tends to prevent women from entering this area of employment.

I believe these issues need to be addressed and I thank the member for Hamilton Centre for bringing forward her progressive resolution.

1130

Mr Charlton: I too rise in support of the resolution of the member for Hamilton Centre. It concerns me somewhat, though, that the member for Hamilton Centre had to bring the resolution forward in the first place. It also concerns me somewhat that the member's resolution focuses on raising minimum standards rather than setting out in specific terms the kinds of facilities that are required to provide people working in construction with some basic human hygienic dignity.

I was pleased to hear the member for Ottawa-Rideau in her comments refer to substantially upgrading washroom facilities. Unfortunately, that is not necessarily reflected in this resolution. However, it is time that we moved forward. This government, a government which has been in office for five years, a government which likes to applaud itself for some of the things it claims to have done, has found itself unable to move on something so simple, so basic and so straightforward as proper hygienic toilet facilities on construction sites.

The member for Ottawa-Rideau also focused on the question of separate facilities for men and women. We heard just the other day the Attorney General trying to applaud himself around the pay equity legislation, which resulted from an accord that the Liberal government signed with this party, not from any individual initiative by the Liberal government in Ontario; pay equity legislation, which is as sadly lacking as are the regulations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act around questions like washroom facilities on construction sites.

But as we move to address, and we are not there yet, the questions of real equality between men and women in the workforce, simple matters like separate washroom facilities become so important both in terms of basic human dignity and as symbols of a real understanding of what it is we are trying to accomplish in the workplaces across this province, whether they be construction sites or industrial plants or offices in office towers.

This resolution we have before us today is one that should be supported, but it is a resolution which reflects a matter that

this government should be ashamed of not having addressed over the course of the last five years, a matter which is so simple and basic to human dignity that it is just absolutely unbelievable that we have to be dealing with a simple resolution here, a resolution which, although we likely will all support it today, mandates no one to do anything with regard to improving washroom facilities on construction sites.

It is imperative that the Liberal members who stood in this House to support this resolution and the Liberal members who stand to vote in favour of it today impress on the Minister of Labour and his colleagues in the cabinet that the passage of this resolution by itself means nothing if the cabinet and the government as a whole do not take what the member for the Ottawa-Rideau referred to as the political will that is required to change the regulations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and make the intent of this resolution a reality for the people who work in the construction industry in the province of Ontario.

The construction trades have been lobbying for changes in this respect for well over 10 years. They have put on major efforts over the course of the last four or five to see basic changes in the availability of and separation of washroom facilities on construction sites, and the government of the Premier has failed to respond.

The member for Hamilton Centre has had to come here with a resolution today because of that failure to listen and respond on the part of the Liberal government of this province. It is time the Liberal members spoke loudly and clearly to the members of the executive council so that we can see regulations in place that will provide decent washroom facilities and separate washroom facilities for men and women on construction sites before this House adjourns at the end of June.

The Deputy Speaker: I have been told that the members of the third party want to donate their time to whoever wants to continue.

Mr Dietsch: It gives me a great deal of pleasure to speak on the resolution brought forward by my colleague the member for Hamilton Centre, a subject which I know she has pursued vigorously. This is also a topic that we heard about when we were travelling the province with the recent public hearings on Bill 208, a bill which seeks to overhaul the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

It is clear, as the resolution states, that there is a need to upgrade and improve the existing regulations. I support the process and approach that was adopted to deal with this matter: labour and management working together to arrive at a satisfactory agreement. This approach is in accord with the tenets of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the amendments to the act which are embodied in Bill 208. I believe it is important to highlight, and I would like to remind members of, those basic tenets of occupational health and safety that the bill is designed to strengthen and enhance.

First, and above all else, the bill provides opportunities for workplace partnership. Together employers and employees are the most effective team we have to improve health and safety on the shop floor, in the office and more particularly on the work site. Second, for this involvement to be meaningful, people must have proper training and education in health and safety practices so they can recognize workplace risks. Next, beyond recognizing risks, people must also be empowered with the rights and the responsibilities so that they can act when they see conditions that place them at risk. Finally, those rights and responsibilities must be exercised in an appropriate manner.

The workplace parties must be obliged by the law to ensure responsible behaviour. The system must include elements of accountability. Those are the basic tenets of Bill 208 which apply to the workplace parties.

Bill 208 will establish many more joint health and safety committees in the workplace, and for the first time, joint health and safety committees will be established on construction sites. The establishment of a formal mechanism such as a committee, or in some instances a health and safety representative, will go a long way to ensuring that basic requirements, such as the regulation now before this House, can be acted upon. I am pleased that there has been labour-management co-operation in the matter brought forward by my colleague the member for Hamilton Centre.

At a meeting I attended recently the Hamilton-Brantford trades council also raised the issue. In my investigation I have found that officials at the Ministry of Labour are aware of the concerns regarding toilets and washing facilities on construction projects. The ministry has been actively involved with the provincial labour-management health and safety committees and also in consultation with various associations, committees and other industry-related groups in formulating possible alternatives which could be used in the pending amendments to the present construction regulation. It is my hope that we can together bring this quickly to a satisfactory conclusion.

1140

In fact, a draft proposal of an amendment to section 89 of the regulations was presented to the provincial labour-management committee yesterday, 2 May. It addresses two of the major concerns raised in the resolution by the member for Hamilton Centre, flush toilets and washing facilities. It is only through the continued process of labour and management working co-operatively together, as exemplified in the principles of Bill 208, that we will be able to continue to make improvements in the workplace, and that, I think, is a goal we can all work towards.

I know this issue has been on the table for a considerable period of time. I also know that the member for Hamilton Centre has vigorously pursued this avenue of settlement for this very important issue. I urge the members of this House to support her about this plight, to bring about healthier, safer workplaces and a better working relationship with those in the construction industry.

Mr Fleet: I am pleased to have this opportunity to rise in support of this resolution and to congratulate the member for Hamilton Centre on her efforts in bringing this forward. I know it is a matter where people who have not had experience or have not had a chance to have some kind of contact with people in the construction industry might well not appreciate fully the importance of this resolution.

I had the benefit of sitting on the standing committee on resources development when we had Bill 208 before us to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act, as my colleague the member for St Catharines-Brock has been relating. I was particularly moved by a number of the presentations that were made by workers about the conditions they had, and not only by the lack of sanitary facilities in places where there were some kind of facilities. I remember particularly in a mining situation that calling it a facility was being generous because it was really not usable in my view at all. In construction sites, there was the complete absence and the very practical daily difficulty this produces for workers. It is not only unfair. It is simply unnecessary.

In an ideal world, we would be able to provide and we should almost always be able to provide flush toilets and hot water for employees in the construction industry. I tried to imagine in what circumstances that might not be possible. Is there any? There may be some where it would be difficult, I thought. Perhaps in the case of constructing a road, it may be very difficult for an employer to provide a traditional flush toilet and running water, but even in that area, I understand that it is possible to rent commercially portable toilet units that have a washbasin with water in a holding tank so that you can still, in a very practical, economical way, provide for a hand-washing facility. It should simply be mandatory at all sites.

Certainly flush toilets and hot water should be mandatory in any places where they can at all reasonably be provided. Again I stress that in the vast majority of cases, it seems to me this would be the case in an economical way. It is a reasonable health standard, as well as a sense of a safety standard that we ought to be concerned about. Certainly the related aspect of sanitary conditions is important and the regulations must be kept up-to-date to ensure we are doing the utmost to make sure that people are operating in safe and healthy workplaces.

There is of course another very important aspect to this resolution that I think would be important to every member of this Legislature and to all the people who are watching or who may read of this debate; that is, the focus the member has placed, quite properly, on ensuring that facilities are available in a fair and equal way to both men and women. Of course, some years ago there were not many women who were working in the construction industry on job sites. That has changed. It is important that we note not only the fact that changes have been taking place, but that this kind of change is a desirable change, that there are not limits to what kinds of work women can do.

It is a non-traditional job category without question, but the members and the public might be surprised to know that there are now some 28,000 women employed in the construction industry in Ontario. It is up dramatically. As we have heard from another of my colleagues, the member for Ottawa-Rideau, the number of women in construction is up some 64% between 1975 and 1985.

Increasingly, if we are to make sure women have the ability to enjoy freedom of occupation in a sense, the ability to be employed wherever they have the interest and the ability to perform, which in essence is in all fields, then we have to make sure that we are going to amend the other kinds of regulations that impact on the way they carry out their work.

There was a settlement reached in 1988 involving a female worker for Stelco and it dealt with the question of providing a washroom facility in an industrial setting. It was a settlement that was worked out through the Ontario Human Rights Commission. I understand that in that case the woman had to walk a long way to a washroom in a trailer. Her male co-workers had facilities that were onsite. The length of time that it took her placed her in an impossible position because it put her in contravention with the provisions of the Operating Engineers Act, which she was obliged to comply with. The commission said, and ultimately in the settlement Stelco acknowledged that it simply was not an acceptable arrangement.

It is time now to acknowledge the steps that have been taken by my colleague and to say we want to expand into the construction site situation and to note as well that women are entitled to be free of harassment and to have equal facilities.

The Deputy Speaker: I note there are 11 minutes and some time left from the third party to be used up by members. What is the wish of the House? Do any members wish to speak?

Does the member for Hamilton Centre request that time? Is there agreement of the House? Agreed.

Ms Oddie Munro: I certainly have appreciated listening to the responses and concerns expressed by various speakers. I would like to take the time allotted to me to focus on details of the resolutions and recommendations put forward by the Hamilton-Brantford, Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council. I think that was one of the concerns. I referred to it obliquely in my original comments, but because of time could not fill them out. Secondly, I would like to reflect on some of the health data.

As I said earlier, there is a scarcity of evidence from a research and development point on industrial disease in the construction sector. I gave the reasons for some of the hesitation or for people simply not taking it seriously enough.

I would like to read to members comments from Maurice Shapiro as he talks about disease transmittal from failure to clean the hands after defecating or skin diseases relating from poor body cleansing, in which he means a worker not having access to facilities to wash his hands, and the best way in which to wash your hands and clean them is with good old soap and water.

1150

He said: "There are health problems relating to personal hygiene practices that occur in industry exclusively. Such problems are related to ingestion of chemical toxins or disease-producing organisms, and to local skin, conjunctival and mucous membrane inflammation due to sensitivity or direct irritative action of industrial chemicals. Uncleanliness, ie, the lack of access to facilities, is probably the most important predisposing cause of occupational dermatitis. Lack of cleanliness in the working environment exposes the worker to large doses of external irritants. Personal uncleanliness not only does the same, but also permits external irritants to remain in prolonged contact with the skin. Workers wearing or carrying to their homes their dirty work clothes may even cause dermatitis in other members of the family who come in contact with soiled clothes, or even among unsuspecting workers who clean them. Safeguards such as protective creams help, but personal hygiene is a necessity."

"Where the employee is in a situation to be exposed to toxic materials or corrosive materials, if he is a food handler or a materials handler and then eats, for example, the need for optimum, clean, well-lighted and well-ventilated washing and locker facilities becomes even more imperative.

"From the point of view of protecting the health of the individual employee and minimizing the possibility of his transmitting infection to others, toilet and washroom facilities should be easily cleanable, adequate in size and number, accessible, maintained and fit with the personal hygiene habits of employees in industry, or the industry itself will suffer."

I would like to respond to the comment from the member for Carleton when he asked why I would bring to the attention of the House the concerns of construction workers for adequate washroom facilities. He may feel better when I tell him that there are 300,000 workers in the province of Ontario who currently are working in conditions that are less than satisfactory, and less than satisfactory when compared with other sectors.

I feel that with even one worker working in those conditions, it is worth while to any member bringing any issue before this House. I also take cognizance of the advice of members of the assembly to ask the Ministry of Labour and the joint management-labour committee to push the amendment forward,

so that indeed the minimum requirements of section 89 can be maintained and even upgraded.

When we talk about minimum upgrading or minimum regulations, we mean simply that. What this means in the context of the ongoing discussion currently in place with the joint labour-management committee, hopefully to be put into the amendment, is that indeed other improvements greater than minimal will in fact take place.

I would like to refer to the details that have already been alluded to by the member for Hamilton East and which I referred to in my introductory statement. When we take a look at the 25 February 1989 resolution submitted by the health and sanitation committee to the Ontario building and construction trades, we see that in addition to the resolutions, of which there were two and I mentioned them, in fact the details are worked out, including provisions for every 15 or more workers.

The time period is specified. It also takes into account some of the concerns that separate facilities are provided for each gender, that toilet and washroom facilities be within easy access of working sites and built so that the occupant is shielded from view, with protection from weather and falling objects. They should be provided with natural or artificial lighting, kept in a clean and sanitary condition, supplied with toilet seats and covers, heated to a minimum of 18 degrees Centigrade and suitably ventilated.

Basins also have minimum standards. I suppose ongoing discussion between labour and management will mean those minimum standards will be strictly minimum, hot and cold running water, soap, paper towels or individual hand towels, and if it is felt necessary to have showers on site, they should have hot and cold running water, soap or hand cleaner and paper towels or individual hand towels. Again, there is the provision that where WHMIS-class products are used, washroom facilities meeting the requirements of the applicable materials safety data sheets shall be provided.

That initial document was then picked up and dealt with by the councils, such as the Ontario Pipe Trades Council, which again itemized and extended the individual requirements that would then presumably be taken by employer and employee on individual sites. In addition, the provincial labour-management subcommittee, which the amendments are currently before, has also described and filled out the recommendation. I think the concerns of the member should be assuaged somewhat by knowing that committee is looking at those particular suggestions.

I would just like again to ask members to visualize for one moment the typical construction site. It is summer now and it is hot. On a typical construction site—I said there probably is not any one, but there are certainly 10 and members could envisage any one of those 10—there are probably corrosive materials on the site, building materials, dirt and possible seasonal pollutants. Workers handle equipment, building materials and perhaps hazardous materials with their hands in the majority of cases, since automated techniques are still not wholesalesely practical in the building trades industry.

Many of the materials handled are capable of irritating the skin, combining with each other to produce all sorts of irritants. Skin rashes are part of the inherent risk of interacting on the work site. You have the seasonal effects of rain, snow if it is in the winter, and heat, and again you get a period of time where diseases can incubate and where indeed the risk factor has to be tracked.

We are not doing enough in research and development—that is true—but I think when you see changes effected in the

amendment of the legislation, that allows for the kind of tracking and regulation that is needed. I have heard trade union movement people say over and over again that with the regulations they hold up from time to time when they pull workers off the job sites, on every page and every amendment going through these books of regulations there are dead people.

I would suggest to the members that in the construction industry we do not want to see Workers' Compensation Board examples. We want to be able to prevent industrial diseases from spreading on construction sites. That is why the amendments before the joint labour committee have taken so long. In this government's tenure, they have been before that committee for three years. I am informed that indeed progress has been made and has been made not only as a result of that amendment, but as a result of the current review of Bill 208, on the act and regulations by the Ministry of Labour and the industry.

I should bring to the attention of the House that no change is done in a vacuum and no change is done as a result of either my bringing a resolution here or as a result of any one body saying that things need to be changed and are not working. In fact, when the changes are proclaimed, and I am certain they will be, the changes will be the culmination of an extensive consultation process during which the Ministry of Labour sought the views of the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario, the Provincial Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee, specific trade labour-management committees, the Construction Safety Association of Ontario, the Council of Ontario Construction Associations and other interested parties.

What one realizes when one puts regulations through that are minimal is that indeed an awful lot of other work has to take place at the same time in order that the differences in different construction sectors are realized and that the changes are appropriate and are applicable.

The regulations again being minimal requirements, I am confident that the changes will extend beyond that, but I am also saying that there will be seen to be, and there will be a great deal of work beyond the confines of that amendment in order that specific conditions at specific sites work out. This again requires full co-operation of all the workplace parties at all levels in the construction industry.

I certainly think it is timely that the amendments are placed in juxtaposition with Bill 208 and those amendments, and that it also take place in concert with the formation of safety committees on projects and the inclusion of construction in Bill 208. I believe that when implemented, all of the amendments will promote a joint forum for labour and management to review and rectify workplace health and safety concerns.

I am told that a draft proposal of an amendment to section 89 of the regulations for construction projects was presented yesterday, 2 May 1990, to the Provincial Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee, addressing some of the major concerns we have talked about today. Again, it will take continued co-operation, but I am confident that with the direction and with the statements of all interested members of the House, the Ministry of Labour and the joint labour-management committee will ensure that amendment moves forward.

I would again like to thank Tom Casey and Mr Wilson for attending on behalf of the Hamilton-Brantford building and construction trades and to recognize that Fred Wilson was the originator of the original amendment that came forward that we are working with today and that the members will see in place tomorrow.

I would also like to thank all the members for their very constructive suggestions and to recognize the way that each one of them came at the particular resolution from a different point of view. There was no duplication, so it seems to me that the resolution is of importance to us. It is certainly of importance to 300,000 workers in Ontario. Each one of those workers has a family, and I can tell members that the greatest day in my life will be to be travelling around the highways and industrial sites and to see less and less Johnny-on-the-Spots and better hooked-up running water facilities. I may even go into the construction industry myself as a trade union person.

I would like to thank the House for what I think has been a very good discussion, and I would like to urge the Ministry of Labour to take account of and be cognizant of it. I thank them also for their co-operation in sponsoring the joint labour-management committee.

1200

COMMERCIAL RENT PROTECTION

The Speaker: Ms Bryden has moved resolution 1.

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will stand down that vote. I will find out what happens to the next question and then I will call in the members.

CONSTRUCTION SITE WASHROOM FACILITIES

The Speaker: Ms Oddie Munro has moved resolution 43.

Motion agreed to.

1206

COMMERCIAL RENT PROTECTION

The House divided on Ms Bryden's motion, which was negatived on the following vote:

Ayes—12

Allen, Bryden, Charlton, Cooke, D. S., Farnan, Hampton, Laughren, Mackenzie, Martel, Morin-Strom, Philip, E., Reville.

Nays—29

Carrothers, Cleary, Cooke, D. R., Daigeler, Eakins, Elliot, Epp, Faubert, Fawcett, Fleet, Furlong, Johnson, J. M., Keyes, LeBourdais, Leone, Lipsett, Mahoney, Mancini, Matrundola, McLean, Oddie Munro, Owen, Patten, Ray, M. C., Roberts, Smith, E. J., Sterling, Velshi, Villeneuve.

The House recessed at 1208.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1330.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

MUNICIPAL FINANCES

Mr Allen: There is talk of tax revolt in Hamilton. With an average potential tax hike of \$203.98, after rigorous trimming of budgets by both local councils and the board of education, the city hike will be 4.9%, the region's hike 7.9% and the board's hike 18.1%.

The city is furious over the education increase and the city finance committee is recommending for the first time ever that the city not collect the education tax but force the board to do so. This malaise and infighting is more than a local matter.

A letter on my desk from the regional council refers to the "disintegration of the historical partnership between the province of Ontario and the regions and municipalities of this province" and urgently requests a meeting with the minister. The problem began under the Tories and continues under the Liberals.

The Liberals have frozen municipal unconditional grants while costs escalate. The Liberals have failed to pass through municipal expenses in social services for federal payback under the cost-shared arrangements. The Liberals fall far short of 50% responsibility for the Hamilton-Wentworth Conservation Authority. Schools have major asbestos removal costs uncompensated by the Liberals at Queen's Park.

In 1985 the Liberals promised to pay 60% of education funding and now they pay 40% province-wide, less than the Tories did, and only 28% in Hamilton. If we have a tax revolt in Hamilton, let us revolt against the right government.

PATRICIA STARR INQUIRY

Mr Sterling: I trust the Premier and the Attorney General have been reading the reviews on their response to the Supreme Court ruling on the Starr inquiry. The Attorney General's interpretation of the ruling has been called "wimpish and wrong, a shameful dive, convenient" and "highly restrictive." To my knowledge, no one has described the Attorney General's interpretation as accurate, fairminded or courageous.

There is general agreement that the government botched the inquiry, that "the province blew it in drafting the terms of reference," that the Premier and the Attorney General "got it dreadfully wrong" and that "the Liberal government of Ontario bungled the inquiry." There is also the concern that "the issue of government responsibility will never be adequately addressed" and that the government is trying to walk away from "its responsibility to investigate." It is recognized and accepted by many outside this government that "an inquiry is still needed, and the Premier has a duty to make sure one is held."

I would be happy to provide the Premier and the Attorney General with copies of these columns and editorials for their scrapbooks. They describe a shameful chapter in the history of this administration because the Starr inquiry was the check on the issue of accountability and credibility of this government. The Premier and the Attorney General have wimped out and the people of this province know it and will not forget it.

DAVID SMITH

Mr Owen: Recently Barrie witnessed the official opening of a community health centre for seniors. To bring about this

service required a great deal of enthusiasm and dedication. The main person who spearheaded that campaign was 84-year-old David Smith.

Mr Smith first arrived in the Barrie area in 1937 under a program initiated by the Liberal MPP for that riding at the time, Dr Simpson, who was also Minister of Education. Armed with a master's degree in philosophy from the University of Toronto, David Smith commenced an experimental program as director of a community life training institute and also became the first secretary of the Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture. The program was to be a model for adult education at the county level.

In 1946 David Smith journeyed to Saskatchewan, where he was employed in developing adult education programs. UNESCO took advantage of his talents in 1953. His work over a period of years took him into North Africa and Asia in evaluating and promoting various programs of self-help. In 1987 David Smith brought together various leaders in the community and showed that his talents for involving people in meeting their own problems are as sharp today as they were when he first came to Barrie a half a century earlier.

I would ask the Legislature today to acknowledge the bright, the alert, the 84 years young David Smith.

DIABETES

Mr Hampton: The Ministry of Health is making plans to locate three regional pilot diabetes education centres in the province. The education centres are to provide diabetes education to the public as one effective means in combating diabetes. Several urban centres across the province are clamouring to have one of the diabetes education centres located in their region. The centre would, of course, bring jobs, money and status for a city like Sudbury, Sault Ste Marie or Thunder Bay in northern Ontario.

I say that all of this is irrelevant. Cities like Sudbury, Sault Ste Marie and Thunder Bay already have diabetes programs in place, albeit smaller programs. The programs in these cities are operated by a major hospital or hospitals located within the urban area in connection with the public health and community health programs that are also found there.

When the Ministry of Health decides on the location of a northern Ontario diabetes education centre it should look at one very important fact: The highest incidence of diabetes in Ontario occurs among our native people. A recent Globe and Mail article pointed out that on some reserves one half of the residents older than 45 suffer from diabetes, which can lead to blindness, heart attacks, strokes and kidney failure. Specific reasons for the higher incidence among native people is not known, but certainly any diabetes centre should be located in an area where this could be looked at.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr McCague: It is not often that we are able to put a pricetag on stupidity, but the spending estimates reveal the nearly \$20 million that the government will spend keeping an eye on its friends and supporters in the auto insurance industry.

My good friend the member for Leeds-Grenville warned more than two years ago that consumers and taxpayers were going to take it in the neck, that they would pay and pay again for the government's incoherent policy on auto insurance. Of course, the government tells taxpayers—who have footed the

bill for studies and commissions the government has ignored, for the auto insurance board which the government has scrapped and for the millions of dollars in tax breaks the government has given to the industry—and it tells consumers, who will not get those promised lower rates, not to worry; they should not worry about an \$8.5-million increase in the cost of making a bad idea worse, because the money will be recovered from the industry.

Who will the industry recover the money from, I wonder? Maybe the government thinks insurers will eat the cost in much the same way it thought developers would absorb the cost of new lot levies.

The new automobile insurance commission will become like the rent control system: expensive, inefficient and complex. We can only speculate as to why the Liberals are so anxious to push the taxpayer into a swamp.

1340

CYCLING SAFETY

Mr Dietsch: Over the past few years traffic has increased dramatically, as has the number of cyclists, ranging from teens to adults, out on the streets with their vehicles, be it for transportation or recreation. With it, the number of injuries and deaths of those between the ages of 14 and 44 have also risen dramatically.

Recognizing that most bicycle safety training programs are geared to children at elementary school level, I, in conjunction with the Niagara Regional Police Force and the Ministry of Transportation, am currently sponsoring a Cycling Safety Week in St Catharines-Brock from 30 April to 6 May, to assist adults and students to drive safely. From 12 noon to 7 pm each day, students, adults and youth from the surrounding residential areas have been targeted to test their safety knowledge and to assist them in avoiding future injuries or tragedy.

At this point in time, I would like to extend my appreciation to Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School, Merritton High School, Denis Morris secondary school, Kernahan Park Secondary School and Niagara District Secondary School, many local and Glenridge Plaza merchants, and the Lincoln county public and separate school boards for their tremendous support of this project.

I would also like to applaud the efforts of the Minister of Transportation for his recent amendments to the Highway Traffic Act, which help bicycle drivers become more aware of their responsibilities on the road and the legal implications of their actions. After all, going safely means getting there alive.

THOROLD AND WELLAND STUDENTS

Mr Kormos: A couple of visits that I have had the pleasure of having in classrooms down in Welland and Thorold over the last few weeks, and the most recent one this morning, cause me and force me, compel me, to speak to the members in this assembly about those classrooms.

Mel Dove and the students at Thorold Secondary School—and I can tell you, Mr Speaker, those students will be with us later this afternoon—provided some of the most insightful questioning about the motives of this government, the conduct of this government, indeed, the rationale or lack of it, more importantly, that this government has for so many of its programs, so many of which are ineffective when it comes to hard-working people and people in communities like Welland and Thorold.

You are talking about a group of young people at Thorold Secondary School who are not content to merely sit back and be

told that things are going to keep on being the way they are. Indeed, these young people at Thorold high school are the types of young people who are going to seize the bull by the horns and provide leadership in their community and indeed in this province.

It is a pleasure to see them here this afternoon, taking a look at the sometimes scandalous things that take place in this very assembly on the part of this Liberal government.

This morning I was with Mrs J. Heinze at Fitch Street school in Welland. Her grade 4 and 5 kids have a better understanding of the needs of this province when it comes to protection of the environment and the future of our air, our water and our land than any member of the Liberal government sitting opposite me. Those kids are to be commended.

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FARM RADIO NETWORK

Mr Villeneuve: Once again, I would like to draw the attention of members and the public to the work done by the Developing Countries Farm Radio Network. This Ontario-based organization provides radio scripts, audio cassettes and other materials to some 700 broadcasters and farming experts in some 100 countries. The material is translated and passed on to the world's poorest farm families, helping them increase their food supplies and benefit their health in general.

Radio is used because roughly one family in three in the developing world owns a radio. But it should also be pointed out that the farm radio network's material has been demonstrated in village squares, schools, tea rooms and various other gathering places. In my view, the network is one of the most cost-efficient means to raise living standards and to help the developing world.

This organization does rely on public support and is a registered charity. Ontarians interested in supporting this organization can contact my office for further information. This organization does excellent work in developing countries.

SOVIET THEATRE STUDENTS

Mr Carrothers: In recognizing the spirit of co-operation and openness between countries, I rise today to acknowledge the presence in our galleries of eight Soviet exchange students and their three teachers. They are from the Experimental Association Midnight Multilingual Theatre School in Leningrad.

While in Ontario they are being hosted by Appleby College—located in my riding—and escorted during their visit, which will end 12 May, by the international affairs club of the college.

The eight students are attending classes at Appleby College and will be visiting various historical and cultural sites across southern Ontario.

Through this exposure the students will be able to experience Canadian culture first hand. During this brief visit, students and teachers at Appleby College have been fortunate enough to learn something of the Russian language and culture and have acquired a deeper understanding of the Soviet way of life.

Appleby students will also have a chance to experience Soviet life first hand during a reciprocal visit scheduled for later this year.

I am sure all members will join me in welcoming these students to our Legislature during their tour of Ontario over the next few days.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

MINING INDUSTRY

Hon Mr O'Neil: I am pleased to rise in the Legislature today to provide details of the initiatives relative to the mining and mineral exploration industries announced in last week's provincial budget.

In the document tabled by my colleague the provincial Treasurer, we have reaffirmed this government's commitment to the economic development of northern Ontario by announcing an additional \$30 million in order to assist prospectors and basic mineral exploration.

We have also announced that the province of Ontario will pursue discussions with the federal government in order to renew the five-year Canada-Ontario mineral development agreement, known as COMDA, which expired on 31 March 1990.

Of this \$30-million funding, a total of \$25 million will be dedicated to enhance the Ontario prospectors assistance program, known as OPAP, and the Ontario mineral incentive program, known as OMIP.

OPAP, which provides grants to qualified individuals for prospecting, has proved to be a great success. OPAP will continue with its current criteria. However, this government will allocate an additional \$1 million a year for the next three years in order to encourage prospecting. This will bring total OPAP funding to \$4 million a year.

OMIP, which provides grants to companies and individuals that are carrying out exploration, will receive an additional \$6 million in the first year and \$8 million per year for the following two years. Grants are equal to 30% of eligible expenses. The maximum allowed for grants will now be doubled to \$300,000. Activities such as diamond drilling and some underground exploration expenditures will now be eligible under this program.

Funding under OMIP will be expanded to include marketing studies, laboratory work and pilot plant studies for industrial mineral projects.

This additional funding for OMIP will also help flow-through funded exploration and development companies which have been recently hurt by federal cutbacks. These companies will now be eligible for funding under OMIP.

As well, my ministry is providing \$1 million in the first year and \$2 million in the following two years for OMIP in the vicinity of selected communities that are facing economic difficulties. Projects undertaken in these communities will receive an enriched OMIP grant. OMIP will refund 50% of eligible expenses, compared with the normal 30%, to a total of \$300,000 per individual or company.

I am pleased to announce that Elliot Lake will be the first community designated as eligible for funding under this community-centred program. A map showing the boundaries of the exact area eligible under this program will be published very shortly.

At this point, I would like to thank the member for Algoma-Manitoulin for the great assistance he has been to me and in cabinet in getting this program through.

We have also made a commitment to pursue negotiations with the federal government to renew COMDA. Projects under this agreement have proved very beneficial to the Ontario mining industry.

The initiatives announced today will complement and enhance the many other measures this government has introduced

in order to ensure the continued success of the Ontario mining industry into the 1990s and beyond.

The Ontario mining industry contributes nearly \$8 billion a year to the Ontario economy and employs more than 80,000 people. The Ontario government is committed to maintaining the strength of that industry and to the economic development and diversification of northern Ontario.

1350

RIDE PROGRAM

Hon Mr Offer: The safety of the driving public across this province is a concern which we all share. I am pleased to announce today that my ministry has committed a further \$1.2 million for the next two years to continue support of the reduce impaired driving everywhere program throughout Ontario. All municipal police forces in the province will be eligible to apply for this additional funding to support their local RIDE initiatives. This funding will keep the RIDE program operating province-wide on a year-round basis.

For the past two years, my ministry has provided municipal forces with funds which were used towards program delivery and to purchase and update existing equipment to operate RIDE. I am pleased to advise the House that in the past two years this funding has allowed 107 forces to participate in the RIDE program. During the first year of the program, over 2.4 million vehicles were screened by OPP and municipal police programs, resulting in over 15,000 12-hour suspensions and almost 10,000 criminal driving offences. This new funding means that street enforcement will be increased in many locations across the province during the next two years.

One of the great strengths of the RIDE program is that it has community roots. It symbolizes the proactive approach being taken in policing. RIDE originated in the city of Etobicoke some 13 years ago. The success of that program and the shared concern of all communities has resulted in the expansion of RIDE throughout the province.

My ministry is proud to support the RIDE program, an initiative that demonstrates a close working partnership between the community and the police who serve it.

The Speaker: Other statements? The Minister of the Environment.

Mrs Marland: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Is the Minister of the Environment making a statement?

The Speaker: A moment ago I recognized the minister to make a statement.

Mrs Marland: It is just that I do not have a copy.

The Speaker: Are copies available?

Hon Mr Bradley: Yes, they are.

An hon member: They're on their way.

The Speaker: Would it be permissible for the minister to go ahead?

Mrs Marland: No. I would like the statement. I am not a speed reader.

The Speaker: Do you still want to open it?

Hon Mr Bradley: I want to wait until all the packages are opened.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. There is still one missing, I guess. Shall we wait until you open it? Minister.

CHLOROFLUOROCARBONS

Hon Mr Bradley: As members know, the stratospheric ozone layer filters out much of the sun's ultraviolet light before it can reach the surface of the earth. Over the past 20 years, the ozone layer has shrunk by an estimated 3% due to human-made ozone-depleting substances.

Scientists warn that increases in ultraviolet radiation result in more skin cancers and cataracts, reduced crop yields and damage to aquatic life. They estimate that a 3% reduction in stratospheric ozone protection will produce 2,000 additional Canadian skin cancer victims each year.

On 16 February 1989, Ontario became the first province to act to protect the earth's stratospheric ozone layer by introducing legislation empowering the government to control the use of ozone-destroying substances. The bill was passed and on 1 July 1989 the first provisions came into force banning the use of chlorofluorocarbons, or CFCs, in the production of rigid foam packaging as well as most CFC aerosol propellants. In total, these actions reduced Ontario CFC use by an estimated 12%.

Today I am pleased to announce the second wave of CFC reductions. New regulations will phase out by 1993 the use of CFCs in producing rigid foam insulation and flexible foam used in furniture. Schedules for six subcategories each contain interim reductions, resulting in all being banned by 31 December 1993. CFC use as a foam-blowing agent accounts for an estimated 34% of Ontario's CFC consumption.

Appliances, water heaters, refrigerated vehicles and rail cars are exempt from the rigid foam regulation until substitutes are developed. Reductions beyond those to be achieved in 1992 are contingent upon commercial availability of adequate supplies of substitute materials, as determined by the ministry.

As of 1 July 1990, the use of CFCs will be banned in slurries, which are used in preparing aerosols, as well as home repair kits for domestic refrigerators and automobile air-conditioners. The exemption for CFCs as aerosol propellants for certain drugs and medicines and for insulation foam products will be removed as of 1 July 1990. Slurries, repair kits and aerosol products account for an estimated 7% of Ontario's CFC consumption.

The capture and recycling of CFCs during maintenance and servicing of automobile and bus air-conditioners and truck and rail car refrigeration units will be required as of 1 July 1991. Steps are also being taken to encourage development of a recycling infrastructure for commercial and institutional air-conditioning and refrigeration systems to capture and recycle CFCs during the servicing of these units.

The government anticipates mandating such recycling in the future, as well as requiring manufacturers and importers of CFCs to use recycled CFCs. In addition, Environment Ontario intends to initiate in the near future a pilot study in the Toronto area to collect and recycle CFCs from discarded refrigerators and freezers. This study will help to identify the best methods for recycling household appliance CFCs.

Ontario is now on track to reduce its use of CFCs and other ozone-destroying substances by more than half in the next few years. I am confident that the pressure the public and the government are placing on industry to get out of the CFC business as soon as possible will result in prompt compliance with these regulations and others which will follow.

Ontario's CFC phase-out program is designed to complement the international Montreal Protocol agreement, which

reduced the production of CFCs by systematically reducing the use of CFCs in our province. The new regulations were formulated in consultation with affected industries and Friends of the Earth, the leading Canadian environmental advocacy group in the field of ozone layer protection. I look forward to the day, as I am sure all members do, when all ozone-depleting substances have been completely eliminated from use.

1400

RESPONSES

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr Laughren: I wish to respond briefly to the Minister of Mines and his statement, which he thinks is going to bail out the Liberal Party all across northern Ontario.

If the minister thinks that \$10 million a year in new money for the next three years is going to help his colleagues in northern Ontario, he is very sadly mistaken. How does that minister think northerners feel when one day they hear the Minister of Transportation and the Premier stand in their places and say there is going to be a \$5-billion transportation program for Metropolitan Toronto, this area at least, while at the same time northern Ontario is going to receive \$30 million, as it has for a number of years through the Ontario heritage fund, and \$10 million a year in new funding for mineral exploration?

As far as the town of Elliot Lake is concerned, the minister says there is going to be an extra \$1 million or so for all of Ontario for the enriched mineral exploration program and that Elliot Lake is going to get a piece of that action. Does the minister really think that is going to solve the problem in Elliot Lake? Where is his program for those communities that are going to see huge numbers of workers on the streets within the next year? Where is his program for that? That is what we are waiting to hear in northern Ontario.

RIDE PROGRAM

Mr Kormos: It is just incredible that the Solicitor General would get up today and brag in the manner that he has when police forces across Ontario have been abandoned by this government in terms of this government's financial responsibilities to those municipalities and those police forces. The transfer of courtroom security to municipal police forces by this government has created financial burdens literally in the millions and millions of dollars for communities large and small across Ontario, financial burdens which are not being compensated by this same government.

For this same government and for this Solicitor General to talk in the manner that he did about the RIDE program is, quite frankly, an embarrassment in view of the fact that this government, but mere weeks ago, liberalized, expanded the guidelines for liquor advertising in this province. This government has invited the liquor companies and the beer manufacturers to peddle their particular substance and their particular drug holus-bolus, regardless of age, regardless of background, regardless of station.

This government has similarly persistently ignored the recommendations of people like John Bates from PRIDE, People to Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere. John Bates and PRIDE have been persistent with this government—futilely, but persistent—in trying to impose upon this government some common sense, which it is hardpressed to find for itself, about what it really means to conduct an attack or assault upon drinking driving here in Ontario.

As long as this province continues to ignore John Bates and PRIDE, as long as this government continues to be in the back pocket of the liquor industry, all the RIDE programs in the world are not going to serve to effectively reduce drinking and driving and the mayhem and the murder that is encompassed in that.

CHLOROFLUOROCARBONS

Mr Charlton: I would like to take a few moments to respond to the announcement by the Minister of the Environment on CFCs. It is useful that the minister is still slowly moving ahead with regulations, but it is also interesting to note that the only set guidelines in this regulation are the guidelines to which industry has already agreed. Unfortunately, the Minister of the Environment is taking the same approach as his colleague the Minister of Energy in the setting of efficiency standards for appliances in this province. She negotiates the standards with the industry and then imposes them.

This announcement today sends out exactly the wrong message to industry in Ontario. "Reductions beyond those to be achieved in 1992 are contingent upon commercial availability of adequate supplies of substitute materials." What that says to industry is, "If you don't spend the money on R and D and you don't come up with the substitutes, we won't implement the next step in this regulation."

The minister also says in his statement they are going to set up a pilot program in Toronto to determine the best way to approach the question of recycling refrigerators in the province, when in fact they already know the most cost-effective way to approach that without having to dialogue with the private sector. They can do it cost-effectively on their own, and what do we get from the minister? A pilot project that is going to set us another 10 years behind in dealing with the problem.

RIDE PROGRAM

Mr Sterling: I want to respond briefly to the Solicitor General's announcement on the RIDE program. Of course we are supportive of the RIDE program, having been the government that introduced the RIDE program to this province and indeed crafted the legislation in such a fashion that it could not be attacked by some of the people.

I only say that it is somewhat inconsistent with what has happened in the very recent past. As members may be aware, after a person is caught under the RIDE program and charged with either blowing over 0.08 or impaired driving, it is very difficult to get a conviction in many of the courthouses across this province. That is because there are inadequate resources going to the courts and in convicting these people.

It is very demoralizing for our police forces to charge individuals with drunk driving and not be able to get them before the courts within a reasonable period of time. It is only through good luck that the Court of Appeal for Ontario upheld the right of the province to drag its feet in bringing these cases to the courts, and hopefully the people who have been caught will be convicted. It seems to us that there is a very deep inconsistency in putting forward money to catch people when there is not enough money to convict people.

CHLOROFLUOROCARBONS

Mrs Marland: In responding to the Minister of the Environment on his statement to regulate the reduction of chlorofluorocarbons, if there is one thing this minister is good

at, it is recycling his old statements. This statement was made last year. There is nothing new in this statement.

In fact, this minister is not even telling us of any progress as a result of my amendment, which required the research and development for alternatives to commercial air-conditioning by the industry. There is nothing in here that pertains to that.

The only accurate thing in this statement, or anything that is of interest to the public of Ontario, is the reaffirmation about what we are in as a result of the depletion of the ozone layer. Everybody knows that. We know about the incidence of cancer. We know about what it is that we are at risk with.

What we do not know is what this Liberal provincial government is willing to do in a very large way to reduce that damage and therefore the risk to the people who live here.

Hon Mr Bradley: Leading the way.

Mrs Marland: We are talking about an 8% solution to a 100% problem.

I think the fact that we asked this minister to get industry to do research and development for alternatives for the commercial and institutional air-conditioning was very relevant. But a year later we hear, whoopee, they are going to ban CFCs in aerosols etc, but most of the manufacturers of aerosols have not been using CFCs for the last two years.

Mr Villeneuve: Also in the few moments left, in response to the Minister of the Environment, he is addressing the greenhouse effect, the ozone depletion. He has not really addressed one of the largest causes of it that the entire United States has recognized, that the worst offender was MMT as an octane enhancer in automotive fuels. Automotive fuels here in Canada contain MMT. It has to be imported from the United States. It is a cancer-causing agent and is a contributor to the greenhouse effect. It has not been addressed by this minister.

This is really a sad situation when the minister tries to tell us that he is a leader and indeed he is not even a follower of the United States, which has banned MMT many years ago; the city of Denver, for example, a city which has an altitude much higher than most and where the oxygen is much less available.

As an octane enhancer, methanol-ethanol, a home-produced renewable resource, can and—it is proven—will reduce the greenhouse effect and will reduce the cancer-causing agents caused by emissions from our automobiles.

The warm weather is coming. The minister will be making statements saying, "Yes, the air pollution in the city of Toronto is much higher," and he will be telling drivers to leave their cars at home. Well, the minister should look at the real problem. Eliminate MMT. Use ethanol-methanol as the octane enhancer and he will start to be environmentally friendly. Take that advice. It is good.

VISITORS

The Speaker: I would ask all members for their attention for a moment. I would like to inform the members that we have a number of visitors in the Speaker's gallery today from the Republic of Argentina. They are the governor of the province of Cordoba, His Excellency Dr Angeloz; the national senator for the province of Cordoba, Dr Grosso; the governor of the province of San Luis, His Excellency Dr Rodriguez Saa, and the national senator for the province of San Luis, Dr Britos. We are also pleased to have accompanying this delegation the ambassador of the Argentine Republic, His Excellency Mr Fernandez.

1410

ORAL QUESTIONS

CHILD ABUSE

Mr Kormos: The Attorney General will know that back on 2 April of this year I called upon the government to initiate a public inquiry into the horrendous violence and sexual abuse imposed upon young boys at St Joseph's Training School in Alfred. Since that time we have learned a great deal. We have learned that violence was not restricted to St Joseph's but that indeed it appears that violence and abuse took place at St John's Training School in Uxbridge.

As well since that time, we have received some judicial interpretation of the Starr or Houlden inquiry decision by the Supreme Court of Canada, and specifically the interpretation given to us here in Ontario by District Court Judge Colter, who is conducting the Niagara Regional Police Force inquiry. In view of the fact that Judge Colter's interpretation of the Supreme Court of Canada's Starr decision is far different from what the Premier and the Attorney General had been telling us up until that time, and indeed would appear to allow the type of inquiry contemplated—

The Speaker: Question.

Mr Kormos: —in view of all those additional facts and what the Attorney General has now learned, will he now consider calling a public inquiry into the abuse at St John's and St Joseph's?

Hon Mr Scott: It is difficult to deal with the question because the premises on which it is based are so clearly erroneous. As the honourable member knows, the decision of Judge Colter was made essentially because the matter of a criminal investigation into the conduct of a police officer—the chief of police in the region—had already been completed and a decision had been made not to lay any criminal charges. As I understand Judge Colter's reason, it was that in light of that there was now no impediment to an inquiry proceeding into the operation of the police department. The Houlden situation is of course entirely different, because in that case there was, at the same time as the inquiry was ongoing, a criminal investigation which, by the way, has now produced a criminal charge.

In the case to which the honourable member refers, I am advised that there is an intensive police investigation going on. Without a grant of immunity to the people who might be accused as a result of that investigation, it would not be possible to conduct a royal commission of inquiry at this time.

Mr Kormos: We know that the government announced its intention to have one Campbell embark upon what will undoubtedly be called the Campbell review. In view of the fact that one Mr Sinclair conducted an exhaustive review back in the 1960s, that the review chronicled and detailed the sexual violence imposed upon young boys at St Joseph's, the physical violence and terrorism imposed upon inmates and young persons in custody at St Joseph's, and the fact that the Sinclair report was ignored by ministers, deputy ministers and officials high in the government of the day, how can this Attorney General expect the public of Ontario to believe that Campbell is going to be any more successful at being heeded than was Sinclair, who was ignored thoroughly by high government officials in the 1960s?

Hon Mr Scott: As long ago as four years ago there was a rule that the supplementary had to arise either out of the answer

or indeed out of the initial question. This is an entirely different question, which has to do with whether the inquiry which has been directed by the Minister of Community and Social Services to be undertaken by a public servant reporting to him into current safeguards with respect to the risks to children is going to be an appropriate inquiry.

I know the inquiry officer, Joanne Campbell, and she is well known, of course, to many people in the opposition. The honourable member for Riverdale nods his head affirmatively. I think all of us who know her—

Mr Breaugh: I didn't say I knew her.

Hon Mr Scott: The honourable member for Oshawa does not know her, but that is not to her discredit. I think all those who do know the chairman of the Social Assistance Review Board, including my friend's former colleague Ross McClellan, who used to be vice-chairman of that board, will agree that there are few people in the province better equipped to conduct a thorough, intensive and thoughtful review into current protections for young people than is Joanne Campbell.

Mr Kormos: I have got news for the Attorney General, and that is that this violence and this sexual abuse of children were not restricted to St John's and St Joseph's, run by the Christian Brothers. Indeed, the Solicitor General was advised last month of a report of similar abuse, equally horrendous, arising at Beattie House, a boys' training school in Cobourg, a provincially run institution.

Similarly, the Premier of Ontario is in receipt of a letter from Gerard O'Sullivan, a retired parole and probation officer, who indicates that he advised the present Deputy Premier during the mid-1970s of this type of violence and abuse taking place in our training schools here in Ontario.

There was clearly a coverup of this sexual violence against children in the 1960s. In view of what we know now, the reports back in the mid-1970s to who is now the Deputy Premier, the existence of this misconduct in public, provincially run training schools like the one at Beattie House at Cobourg, what is being covered up by the Liberals now in 1990?

Hon Mr Scott: The honourable member will know, if he reads the papers, that there is an inquiry going on in Newfoundland in which the issue is, why were allegations of abuse of children not brought to the attention of the police and the Attorney General of the day for the purposes of prosecution? That is an important question because it emphasizes that prosecution in respect of criminal offences is what the law not only demands but requires.

I encourage the honourable member, if he has evidence or even suggestions of abusive acts that might amount to criminality, to bring them to my attention or to the Solicitor General's attention, or indeed to any of my colleagues' attention, and we will do what we have done in this case, which is to refer the matter to the police to conduct an investigation. A royal commission stands in the way of that process because it can only be conducted by granting immunity to those who might be charged. I am not prepared to grant immunity to people who commit criminal acts of this type. We are going to investigate them and prosecute them if there is evidence.

LANDFILL SITES

Mr Reville: My question is not for the Minister of Health; it is for the Minister of the Environment. Two groups, Save the Rouge Valley System and Pickering-Ajax Citizens Together, are concerned that the possible sites they have organized around

and the communities they have organized to protect are about to be nominated by the Premier and the five regional chairs as interim landfills.

Mr Faubert: Not the Premier at all.

Mr Reville: Perhaps Gardner Church—same thing.

Their concern, and my concern, is that the Minister of the Environment will wimp out and allow these to go ahead under a pretend environmental protection approval mechanism rather than an Environmental Assessment Act procedure. We know that in the north a full environmental assessment is required for a small local dump. Why would the minister have a different standard for a major dump in the Metropolitan Toronto area?

Hon Mr Bradley: As the member will be aware, any proposal that would be made by the various representatives involved in the greater Toronto area would have to go through an Environmental Assessment Board hearing. At the hearing, the board would hear evidence from those who are in favour—that is, the proponents—and those who are opposed. The people who are opposed would have to be funded under the Intervenor Funding Project Act, which was brought in as formal legislation by the Attorney General. They will have the opportunity to make all of their arguments before the board, and the board will render the decision.

Mr Reville: The minister knows that the procedures under the Environmental Protection Act are much less onerous than those under the Environmental Assessment Act. Under the latter procedure, which can be long, onerous and tough, the proponent is obligated to look at alternatives, alternatives that we favour, the alternatives of reduction, reuse and recycling, not just whether or not the environmental circumstances surrounding the particular site can be dealt with.

Why would the minister not indicate now to the House that he is concerned enough about the protection of the environment in all parts of the province to require that before either of these sites is approved, in Whitevale or Rouge River-Beare Road, they be done under a full environmental assessment under the Environmental Assessment Act?

1420

Hon Mr Bradley: I do not think the member may be as intricately knowledgeable about the Environmental Protection Act as perhaps those who have to deal with it on a daily basis, because if he were, he would recognize that it is an extremely onerous act in itself in that it looks at all of the scientific, technical and environment implications of any proposal that comes before it. If you talk to the lawyers and the experts who have to appear before the Environmental Assessment Board dealing with the Environmental Protection Act, they will tell you it is an extremely onerous act. As I think the member would recognize, the board is an independent board which is used to hearing applications of this kind and would surely not approve of any proposal which would not be environmentally safe.

The sites that are proposed or the particular mechanisms that are proposed would have to meet all of the requirements of a review which takes into consideration all the ministries of the government that could be commenting, other commenting agencies and of course the arguments put forward. They would also have to take into consideration, of course, the fact that the government and the municipalities mentioned are promoting reduction, reuse and recycling.

Mr Reville: Mr Speaker, I am sure you will agree that the intricacy of my knowledge of the EPA is not the issue here. The

issue is the commitment of the Minister of the Environment to protect the environment. Pickering-Ajax Citizens Together is convinced that the Whitevale site has adequate capacity to become a permanent dump site, not some kind of interim dump site in which Metropolitan Toronto can get rid of 4.6 million tonnes of garbage but many millions of tonnes more than that. I think that indicates that the much more difficult process of surviving an Environmental Assessment Act procedure is required. Why will the Minister of the Environment not now stop temporizing and bafflebaggabbing the House and commit himself to requiring that fuller, more detailed, more difficult hearing to protect citizens wherever they are?

Hon Mr Bradley: I think the member would be familiar with the greater Toronto area exercise—an exercise, by the way, bringing the various regions together to deal with waste management in this way, which was proposed by Richard Gilbert, one of his former colleagues in municipal government. It was a proposal that was brought forward and accepted. The member should know that any long-term site for the GTA—not the interim site that I think he is making reference to—is subjected to the Environmental Assessment Act, as you are dealing with years and years beyond that.

I think he would recognize as well that a hearing before the Environmental Assessment Board, with intervenor funding for the opponents and with all of the environmental considerations before the board, is one which is going to render a decision which is environmentally acceptable. I think for the member to suggest that the Environmental Assessment Board would not want to hear all of the arguments put forward and not be in a position to make a decision on whether any site would be environmentally desirable or not would be misguided.

ASSISTED HOUSING

Mr Brandt: My question is to the Minister of Housing. The minister knows that in this calendar year the expenditures for housing by his ministry are estimated to be in the range of some \$585 million. The minister also knows that, irrespective of the amount of money spent by government on social housing, the only way the problem can be controlled in terms of expenditures and in terms of meeting the needs is for the private sector to be involved as well in that particular industry. Can the minister indicate when he anticipates the private sector will again become involved in constructing rental housing in the province?

Hon Mr Sweeney: The actual budget for the Ministry of Housing for this fiscal year is approximately \$666 million, which is an increase of about 25% from last year. The honourable member is correct that almost all of that increase—not all, but almost all—is going to additional subsidies for various forms of assisted housing. But the honourable member would be aware of the fact, because it has been mentioned in this House before, that there will be some 17,000 starts in assisted housing, and all of those are built by the private sector. As a matter of fact, I get a considerable number of letters and correspondence from the private sector urging me to support non-profit applications from their various municipalities, because they are the ones that are building this.

The second point I would make to the honourable member is that he is well aware of the fact that the private sector in fact is building a considerable amount of rental housing. Because of other potential consequences they are called condominiums, but most of that stuff, in this city at least, is ending up as rental housing. As a matter of fact, I am—

The Speaker: That seems like a fairly complete answer.

Mr Brandt: The minister's parliamentary assistant indicated that within three years, in all likelihood, the budget for housing would exceed \$1 billion. It is anticipated that the housing budget will continue to escalate as the private sector abandons the market here in Ontario. My question to the minister is, how much does he think the people of Ontario can afford, since by his own admission, his budget is escalating year to year by some 25% and yet the more he spends the worse the problem gets? When will the private sector become involved in the housing sector in Ontario to the extent that it can help to solve the problem?

Hon Mr Sweeney: I tried to clearly indicate to him that the private sector is very much involved. I indicated one way in which it is involved. The other way in which the private sector is involved, and again this has been brought to my colleague's attention, is in the allocation of provincial lands for housing. I have indicated to him that we have six major allocations this year. We had a couple last year. One that I drew to the House's attention, I believe it was in December, was in the Stoney Creek area, where the private sector is building all the housing; this particular developer-builder is going to establish the prices at the market level. Some 84 of those units are going to be affordable, and I believe the figure was something just under \$60,000 per town house unit.

We have already announced that we are going to be beginning the Seaton project just at the north end of the municipality of Pickering. There is going to be housing there for 90,000 people. Most of it will be housing for sale. It will all be built by the private sector. We have a provincial land use policy for housing whereby all new developments must contain 25% affordable housing. It is all built by the private sector. I am not quite sure of the point that my honourable colleague is trying to make.

Mr Brandt: With respect to the point I am trying to make, back in 1984-85 the Housing budget at that time was \$188 million. Subsequently, in 1990, the Housing budget is well in excess of \$500 million. The estimates by the minister's own parliamentary assistant indicate that that budget, within three years, will go to in excess of \$1 billion, yet we have 40,000 people on waiting lists for subsidized housing in this province and we have 200,000 citizens of our province who are homeless. How is it that the more the government spends the worse the problem gets? Those are the realities, those are the facts.

Hon Mr Scott: I can hardly wait until Ottawa Centre hears this.

Mr Brandt: The government's policies are failing—and I wish the Attorney General would keep quiet while we are trying to have a dialogue on this subject.

Hon Mr Scott: That is because I can't stand it.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Sweeney: Let me just draw to my colleague's attention that in 1989 the rental starts in Ontario, all built by the private sector, were 14,400, and of those, 10,200 were totally private, over 10,000. If we take ownership starts we have a total of 78,900, for a total of 93,300. That is quite a few. Our best estimate for this year, and of course we will not know, is 84,000.

I can go through all those figures again. I have already mentioned in this House that in the non-profit area Ontario is building more units each year than all of the rest of the country

put together. I would expect in the private area you would find figures which would be comparable. In other words—

Mr Brandt: You've got Prince Edward Island whipped. We'll agree with that.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Sweeney: The point is that we are building slightly under 100,000 units—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. New question.

1430

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mrs Marland: My question is to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues. I know that this minister, like myself, has a daughter. I want to raise with the minister the growing fear that women in this province are experiencing. It seems that every day we hear of yet another young woman who has gone missing, and it seems too often that these women are found murdered or abused. Certainly the incident at the Université de Montréal would have given her some warning about what risks we are facing in Ontario.

I know that the minister is aware of a recent poll that indicates over half the women who live in Toronto do not go out at night after dark because they are afraid in their own neighbourhoods. We also know now, with the tragic killing of Lynda Shaw, that women are afraid to drive on our highways at night.

I know that the minister speaks, as I do, for many women in the province and I want to know what she is doing, as the person responsible for women in this province, to alleviate the feeling of terror that is increasingly existing among women today in Ontario.

Hon Mrs Wilson: The honourable member opposite is quite right when she tells us that women do live in fear of assault and women accordingly adjust their daily lives. We are concerned in this government that women should not have to live in fear, that women should feel safe in their own homes, in their workplaces and on the streets of Ontario.

This government is committed to maintaining safe and secure communities for women in this province. In January, I announced new funding of some \$28.8 million to address the issue of sexual assault of women, and I believe that those new initiatives will make a difference for women in this province.

Mrs Marland: Mr Speaker, I think you will agree that we have a great deal more to do to change the attitudes that lead to abuse and violence against women. With that in mind, I am sure that you will be as shocked as I am at hearing about a so-called self-help cassette tape that is currently being sold in a Toronto bookstore three minutes from here. The tape is designed to counsel through self-hypnosis women who have suffered sexual abuse.

In my opinion, this tape is hate literature. I was personally horrified to hear this so-called therapist advise sexual abuse victims that they are to blame for their abuse. He tells women they must come to terms with the fact that, in effect, they reaped what they sowed.

If people are to take advantage of these vulnerable people, as vulnerable as victims of sexual abuse are—and it is totally intolerable, as far as we are concerned—I want to know, now that the minister is aware of this tape in Ontario available everywhere in a bookstore, what she plans to do about it.

Hon Mrs Wilson: Part of our campaign against sexual assault is a prevention and education campaign. Some \$1.7 million is going towards dispelling myths about sexual assault. Often women think the perpetrator is the stranger who leaps from behind dark bushes wearing a balaclava when we know quite well that in most instances victims know the perpetrators of those sexual assaults. Our prevention and education campaign will work with communities across the province to educate the public to the myths and the facts about sexual assault.

I too am disturbed that such a cassette might exist. Although I am not familiar with this one, I am very pleased that the member has brought it to my attention. I will certainly take this matter up with the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, where these issues fall. I will take the opportunity to bring that to his attention.

Certainly when we are dealing with sexual assault, we must deal with facts and educate the public that sexual assault is not a woman's fault. We are dealing here with issues of power and control, the issue of violence against women by men, which has occurred over centuries because of attitudes that have been passed down from generation to generation.

Mrs Marland: I sincerely wish that this minister had a little more passion and commitment to the women of this province. I have to tell her that the so-called therapist on this tape talks about a woman he counselled who had been raped by her husband. He says through his counselling he discovered that the woman had been raped in a previous life.

Interjections.

Mrs Marland: These Liberal members who are now interjecting think that all that women have to do is adjust their daily lives. What I am saying to the minister is that the women in this province want this Liberal government to do more than tell them to adjust their daily lives; they want help from the government of this province. All we get are platitudes and repeats of the same statements. We have not seen any changes.

The Speaker: Your question?

Mrs Marland: This tape is an example of horrifying psychology. The very least that this government could have committed to was to remove this kind of stuff from the stores that we know exists in other forms. It is blatant pornography, as a matter of fact.

The Speaker: Is that your question?

Mrs Marland: My question is this: In this day and age, when shelters for battered women are having to turn victims away because they cannot meet the demand, when young women are afraid to drive alone at night, as I said previously, in fear of becoming another Lynda Shaw, when incidents of sexual abuse are rising every month, this kind of backward psychology is simply not acceptable. Is the minister prepared to change—

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mrs Wilson: This government is firmly committed to addressing the important issue of sexual violence against women. Our new initiative of \$28.8 million of new funding presents a five-year, long-term strategy for dealing with those issues. We are dealing with prevention and education, we are dealing with justice initiatives and we are dealing with services to victims. Most of those dollars are going to services to victims.

We are tripling the funding to rape crisis centres across this province, we are providing additional training time for police

officers so that they can deal in a sensitive manner, we are providing additional time to crown prosecutors, to victim/witness assistance programs, to forensic kits in hospitals across the province, as well as increased funding to increased numbers of sexual assault care centres in hospitals.

I am confident that these new initiatives, which are addressed in a co-ordinated and comprehensive way, do have the opportunity to make a meaningful difference to the lives of women in this province.

[Applause]

Mrs Marland: I would be embarrassed to applaud, frankly, any of you.

The Speaker: I allowed the member for Mississauga South 100 seconds for her question.

Mr McLean: Not nearly enough.

The Speaker: Actually, 74. New question.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr Mackenzie: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. This past Saturday morning, while workers were at the dedication of a memorial to injured and dead workers in Hamilton, Peter Casperson, 51 years of age, married, with five children and 24 years of service at Stelco in Hamilton, was killed on the job.

Mr Casperson was electrocuted while working alone. Mr Casperson's union, United Steelworkers Local 1005, has tried to convince the Ministry of Labour on many previous occasions that this practice of workers working alone is wrong and dangerous. We now see the tragic results.

If this government had enforced the regulation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, section 46, regulation 692, Mr Casperson would not have been working alone, without adequate protection or without the power supply having been disconnected. How many more workers must die in this province before this government adequately enforces health and safety legislation?

Hon Mr Phillips: It is tragic when a worker dies in the workplace, and our sympathies of course go out to the family. I assure the member that our staff is looking thoroughly into the situation, conducting a thorough investigation. As well, I gather the coroner will be investigating. If there were any deviations from our regulations, we will investigate that thoroughly, and if there is action required, we will take action, including prosecution.

As I say, I regret very much the all-too-frequent deaths that occur in our workplaces. Our ministry will investigate thoroughly, and if there have been any violations of our Occupational Health and Safety Act, we will take the appropriate measures.

1440

Mr Mackenzie: Words are cheap; it is enforcement that we need. The last fatality at Stelco in Hamilton was Lucien Buello, who was killed while operating a crane on 5 June 1988. The inquest into his death has just been set for September 1990, 26 months after his death.

The Steelworkers union at Stelco and unionists across Ontario have long demanded mandatory inquests in all industrial deaths, as currently exist in mining fatalities. No inquest date has, of course, been set as yet in Mr Casperson's case, but the question is, when will it be called? Will it take another 26

months, as it did in Mr Buello's case? Is it not now time to require mandatory inquests within a set period of time in all industrial deaths in the province?

Hon Mr Phillips: The important matter is that each of these situations be thoroughly investigated, that all the facts come out and, if an inquest is necessary, that the coroner call that inquest. I think what is important for all of us is that the situation be thoroughly investigated and, if charges are necessary, that they be laid.

I will assure the members of the House once again that our ministry will investigate it thoroughly. As well, I am sure, if an inquest is necessary, the coroner will call that. If charges are necessary after our investigation, we would lay those charges under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

MUNICIPAL ELECTION INVESTIGATION

Mr McLean: My question is for the Solicitor General. It concerns his handling of the OPP investigation into alleged proxy voting violations during the 1988 municipal elections in the township of Tiny.

Yesterday I was surprised to hear that a judge's wife may be involved in this matter, and it has been brought to my attention that a former Solicitor General's sister may also be involved. Yesterday the Solicitor General suggested that if anyone has any information relating to this investigation, he or she should share it with the local police.

I would suggest they have already done that over the one and a half years it has taken to complete this investigation, and the results of that investigation have been in the Solicitor General's hands since 28 March. It is time for him to come clean with us and provide us with the results of the OPP investigation. Will he do it now?

Hon Mr Offer: I think the question was, in many ways, posed to me yesterday, dealing with the ongoing investigation of the allegations around Tiny township and the whole question of proxy voting. I think at that point I said that the investigation is ongoing.

I think it is imperative that one clearly indicates that there is no report provided to me that investigations are conducted by police officers. When they have compiled all the information, they take their findings and consult with the crown attorneys. I am advised that this type of investigation by the police officers is complete. They are now discussing that with the crown attorneys with respect to whether there should or should not be charges laid in any particular matter.

Mr McLean: The procedure has not been directly the same as the situation in Wasaga Beach. That officer reported to the crown attorney in the city of Barrie. This situation here has never gone through that normal channel. This situation has been dealt with directly by the attorney's office in Metropolitan Toronto.

I ask the Solicitor General, if the investigation has been the same, why have they bypassed the local crown attorney and why are they now dealing with it in Toronto? When is the minister going to have the answer for us with regard to this subject?

Hon Mr Offer: In response to the member's question, I think it must be stated time and time again, because the message just does not seem to be getting out, that the police investigate matters. They investigate matters in every allegation. They investigate matters thoroughly and exhaustively.

In the course of their investigations and when they have compiled all the information they feel they can compile, in the usual and normal course, they discuss the matter with crown attorneys. They discuss matters with a view to determining whether charges should be laid and, if so, what type of charges should be laid.

In fact, as a result of those types of discussions, in some cases, in the usual and normal course, it may be necessary to investigate the matter further. In that respect, investigations are continuing and always ongoing, until a final decision is made as to whether charges should or should not be laid.

For the member to stand in his place and suggest that there has been any difference in procedure in this matter is factually incorrect. It is incorrect because of the fact that in all cases that is the procedure that is followed.

NORTHERN POWER DEVELOPMENT

Mr Miclash: My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. As I indicated in the House yesterday, I spent a day up at Sandy Lake with the Severn River Coalition, the Sandy Lake band and the students of Sandy Lake. At that time, the coalition made it clear to me that it was travelling around the area of the Severn River basin soliciting the views of the people who live along that river in regard to the establishment of power dams.

They made it very clear to me that they were not in favour of power dams being developed that would flood their traditional hunting grounds or homeland and the reserves. May I request the minister's support, as Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Energy, in assuring the people of this Severn River area that this area will be designated as they wish it, as a dam-free zone?

Hon Mrs McLeod: I appreciate the honourable member's question. He will be interested to know that at this time we have no formal applications for power dam development along the Severn River. But certainly I want to assure him and his constituents that if there should be a formal application for development forthcoming, we would share his concerns and the concerns of his constituents for any potential environmental impacts. We would want to carry out a very thorough study of any impact, whether it be on lands, waters, wildlife or fisheries.

In considering any application for development, I would also want to ensure that there would be an involvement of the native people living in the area so they could be assured that no development would go forward which would have a negative impact upon their homeland or their reserves. In fact, our concern would be that not only would there be no negative impact on native peoples in the area of any proposed development, but that there could in fact be benefits to any development.

Mr Miclash: I would just like the minister to assure both myself and the people I mentioned along the Severn River area, the people of the reserves who may be affected, that we will be advised if any further development at all is mentioned in terms of the Severn River.

Hon Mrs McLeod: I would be quite happy to give the honourable member an assurance that no development would be pursued without the full involvement of all those who would be affected.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr Allen: Recommendation 272 of the Transitions report on social assistance reforms recommends that the government publish an annual report that describes the progress made in implementing the recommendations. This is not a unique idea.

In response to its special parliamentary committee on disabled and handicapped persons, the federal government issues an annual report on the progress of implementing its procedure, a report in which there are many recommendations. Along with this recommendation 272 there are many stage one recommendations of that very report that have not yet been implemented.

Why would this minister not tell the public of Ontario what he has done, what he has not done, what he is going to do and what he will not do by issuing such a report as recommended by Transitions to keep everybody straight in the implementation of a very complicated and very substantial report?

Hon Mr Beer: I would be delighted to report to him and to others on the status of the implementation of the Social Assistance Review Committee report and of the recommendations. I understand that I may have a fulsome opportunity during estimates and would want to do that.

It might be of interest to the honourable member to know that of the 274 recommendations, some 80 have been implemented and another 30 have been partially implemented. Some 38 deal with other ministries and other governments and some 22 fall within the ambit of the Provincial-Municipal Social Services Review Committee.

In terms of the specific legislative reform process that we are now into, there are some 100 recommendations, of which I am told about 50 would require legislative change. I think it would be worth while to explore those. Certainly we are going to be going over those in detail as we proceed with the legislative review.

1450

Mr Allen: I am aware of those figures of implementation. They are very miscellaneous in some respects because they may and do miss some of the major recommendations that were made along the way, even for the first stage.

For example, among the oversights are such critically important questions as raising the asset ceilings, which are so important, to support recipients on their route from dependency to autonomy and independence, or for example, making special needs that are necessities mandatory as opposed to discretionary benefits. Very important and real people are suffering as a result of the lack of implementation of items like that. For example, we are learning that all over the province municipalities, in trying to shape their own budgets, are looking to cutting back on their allocations for special needs while the needy continue to require them, and the minister has not insisted that they follow through.

Is it the minister's intention not to act on some of those early, stage one, very important and critical elements of the recommendations? If so, when will he do that kind of reporting regularly to the public so that the public, and not just those of us in estimates, can keep track of where it is at?

Hon Mr Beer: Not at all. We intend to deal with the issues the honourable member has mentioned. As he might know, the question of special needs has come up from a number of municipalities, and that is one of the specific issues addressed in the Provincial-Municipal Social Services Review Committee as well as in the social assistance report. We will be coming to a

determination about that during the process that will finish early this fall.

In fact, the committee said that it required further elaboration, and some of those we feel we can address within the context of the legislative review. Some we are going to be able to move and deal with in the interim, and by no means do we believe that the legislative review means we cannot move in some of those specific areas. We are discussing with the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto around that specific issue.

I think that through a number of vehicles I will have an opportunity to report not only to the Legislature but to the public at large and to the specific interest groups on exactly how we are moving to implement the reforms that were set out in the Thomson report, but I think the record to date is impressive.

CANADIAN PARAPLEGIC ASSOCIATION

Mrs Marland: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Four regional offices of the Canadian Paraplegic Association closed on 1 May and I know the minister is aware of this. Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Kingston and Windsor offices closed because the government was not willing to agree to a funding partnership with the association. The minister said in this House on 26 April that he is "continuing discussions with the association." The House should be aware that the fact is that the minister has not yet met with the association on this issue. You certainly would think this minister would show much more interest in this matter.

My question is, why has the minister not responded to this problem, given the fact that at least 300 paraplegics will be negatively affected by the closing of these offices?

The Speaker: That was brief.

Hon Mr Beer: I appreciate the opportunity to provide the honourable member with some of the facts in the present situation. The honourable member would want to know that we are actively involved with the association, and indeed fund its programs at a high level. The difficulty the association has found itself in is that it had received a three-year Trillium grant to develop services. That grant ended and they came to us to see whether we could cover all of the different centres they had set up under that grant.

In our discussions with them, we suggested that there were some different avenues we could look at to provide services. Indeed, I can assure the honourable member that those in those municipalities who were being served by the association are being provided with the services they require. We are continuing, through officials in my ministry working with the association, to get into a long-term planning process that will enable the association to continue to grow, but in a more organized manner.

Mrs Marland: Mr Speaker, I appreciate the fact that you noticed my question was brief, when you told me that 100 seconds was the length of my question on women's issues earlier.

The minister and the rest of the government should take note that northern, eastern and western areas of this province are adversely affected by the closure of these offices. The minister has suggested that services provided by these regional offices will be provided by other sources. It is interesting that the disabled community and many social service providers do not share this point of view. I have a letter from the Ontario March of Dimes that expresses concern that services to paraplegics in

the north will not be available as a result of the closure of the Sudbury and Thunder Bay offices.

My question is this: Why is it that the minister is not committed to providing the same services to persons with disabilities in regional areas as he is in the large centres of this province?

Hon Mr Beer: Nothing would be farther from the truth. Indeed we are, and we are providing those services.

I should inform the honourable member that a number of different agencies are involved in providing services to the disabled, including the Canadian Paraplegic Association. I am committed to ensuring that continues and indeed have asked specifically that the services that are available in the north be as accessible and available as those in the south. If the honourable member has information to the contrary, I would want to look into it, but at this point in time it is our understanding that people in those centres are being properly serviced.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Mr Owen: I have a question for the Minister of Health. The minister will recall that on 27 March I raised in the Legislature, and at other times I have also spoken to the minister about, the matter of the drug Deprenyl, which is used by victims of Parkinson's disease. At the time, I pointed out to the minister that the cost of the drug was very high—I was told about \$2.41 per pill—and that this cost was causing a severe hardship to many who were looking to our government for assistance.

I wonder if the minister could advise us with an update as to if and when the Minister of Health will be able to extend financial assistance to victims of Parkinson's who are in need of this drug.

Hon Mrs Caplan: I want to thank the member for Simcoe Centre for his continued interest and concern in this important matter to his constituents, and to himself, I know. I have accepted the recommendations of the Drug Quality and Therapeutics Committee that coverage for this drug will be provided under the Ontario drug benefit program in the limited use category.

As members may be aware, residents who are eligible for benefits under this program must be over the age of 65 or be on some form of social assistance here in the province. I would say that the member opposite has been an advocate on behalf of his constituents in this important matter. He knows we are committed to ensuring that there is no financial barrier for those people for whom the drug would be a benefit. We are in fact committed to doing everything we can to constantly improve the Ontario drug benefit program and ensure that all the drugs listed in that program result in the very best therapeutic value for the people receiving those benefits.

Mr Owen: As the minister is aware, this drug was approved for marketing by the federal health protection branch in January this year. I would also point out that the drug has been in use in Europe for something like 20 years, but only now has it been approved by the federal government of this country.

I wonder if the minister could explain what steps, if any, can be taken to ensure that assistance is made available on Parkinson's disease without approval, and whether there might be any comment on the overall procedure and length of time it takes to get approval at the federal level, let alone assistance from the provincial.

Hon Mrs Caplan: In response to the member's very important question around process, the federal government has its

responsibilities and in fact the federal body gave approval for the marketing of this new drug in Canada last January. The Drug Quality and Therapeutics Committee here in Ontario has a very important role, and that is to deal more with the therapeutic value of any drugs that are for sale and available in Canada.

We felt it was extremely important that this panel of experts on the Drug Quality and Therapeutics Committee advise us before we offered any assistance for any new drug here in Ontario, and this drug was no exception.

We want to make sure we are paying for drugs that are going to give us the very best therapeutic results and that we do not pay for drugs that are of questionable or undetermined medical value. That is the role of the Drug Quality and Therapeutics Committee. The DQTC, as it is known, has done its review and I have accepted its recommendation. I am pleased to inform the member that Deprenyl is now available as a benefit and has—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Thank you. I appreciate the help of all the members. However, it would be better without.

1500

PENSION REFORM

Mr Morin-Strom: I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions with respect to pension protection for retirees in our province today. As the minister knows, over a million Ontarians are living on pension plans and their incomes are deteriorating every year, every month because of lack of inflation protection. At the same time, over the last three years, because this government has not acted on pension reform, there are thousands more pensioners every day, retirees who are going on to pension plans that are not protected from inflation.

Will the minister tell us why it is that his pension reform package died with the election of a majority government three years ago, and where on earth are his proposals and specific legislation to provide inflation protection for retirees right across the province?

Hon Mr Elston: The honourable gentleman would know and would want to tell the people of the province that in fact pension reform consideration has not died. The paper that was released last year has put forward several options. There has been a great deal of interest expressed right across the province with respect to the suggestions in the paper, which really said: "Please respond to our proposals as options. Tell us where you think they are weak, where you think there are strengths and where we can go farther and assist people to establish even more pension plans in the province of Ontario."

If the member had read our paper, he would have known that all those items have been canvassed very thoroughly in the context of that discussion paper and that as a result we have received a very large volume of interesting replies from people, not only as sponsors, not only as people who manage pension plans and not only as people who are members of existing plans, but from individuals who are interested in expanding pension plans in the province. He should be very clear that our consideration of the issue of pension reform has not died. In fact, there are proposals being considered about indexing now and I wish he would be very clear in his supplementary.

Mr Morin-Strom: Let's be a little more specific then. The government's proposal that he is referring to was dated March of last year. It provided for a 60-day consultation period. That

was very specifically identified. Well, 60 days was May of last year. We are now May of this year, 12 months later, and we have heard nothing as a result of that consultation period.

Why does the minister give the rest of the province 60 days to consult and then he sits on it for 12 months and does nothing about it? When is he going to give us a date for specific legislation and a specific plan to provide protection for pensioners and retirees, with more people retiring every month in this province? They are retiring without any inflation protection. Is he going to provide some for retirees this month, next month or when?

Hon Mr Elston: I have become very much aware of the fact that when I bring legislation to this Legislature, the New Democratic Party does not particularly like it much. In fact, when I put proposals in front of the Legislature, its members talk at length and preclude this government from moving to provide protection for people who find auto insurance is too expensive. They like to delay it so that the implementation of a plan that will help people is prevented from being brought in. There is no desire by those people in the official opposition to see the Liberal Party bring forward assistance to people.

I take it that when we bring forward the type of reform that is needed to assist pensioners and others in this province, those people in the official opposition will again barrack until they try to prevent us from helping those people. That is the way they deal with our responsible and fiscally sound and very helpful pieces of legislation. For them to say that we are sitting on the resolve to help the people—

Interjections.

The Speaker: I see the member for Durham East waiting patiently.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I thank the member for Durham East for being so patient. You may now ask your question.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mr Cureatz: Mr Speaker, living on the edge again, I can see by the time—I guess it is out of the question to ask for unanimous consent to make sure I get my supplementary on.

My question is to the Minister of Correctional Services. It has been reported over the last week or two about an inmate who had been incarcerated in one or two of the minister's institutions. His statement alleges the most access to and availability of alcohol and drugs in the institutions. Has the minister or his staff had the opportunity of pursuing with that particular individual his allegations as to whether they have been substantiated or not?

Hon Mr Patten: I appreciate this question because it is one that of course concerns us and is an ongoing problem that we have to face in our institutions. I should say to the member for Durham East that having read the allegations in the Toronto Star, any time there are allegations we have follow-up. We make a special investigation. It is ongoing at the moment. I have not received any information from the individual who alleged many of these particular events that were taking place in our institutions.

I am aware that from time to time we do discover illicit drugs or indeed even alcohol, especially in some of our minimum security institutions. We have a set of procedures at work. We have special training for our staff in order for them to try to

identify it. But from time to time we discover after the fact that this happens.

In this instance, I have not heard from this individual. This is a question the member is asking. I have said I would like to hear from him. I need the help of somebody to identify either specific people or certain contexts in order to pursue our investigation.

Mr Cureatz: I thank the minister for his frankness. Of course, as he indicated, from time to time there are problems of alcohol and drug abuse within the institutions. I have asked him on previous occasions, if we had the opportunity of pursuing a new institution, to sell the old Whitby Jail so that a new institution would make accommodation to ensure that these kinds of abusive substances would not be readily available. I know that in the long run we would have better solutions to what is taking place with repeat offenders.

With his acknowledgement that drugs and alcohol are available from time to time in the institutions, has the minister made any different corrective measures over recent times to ensure that officers on duty are implementing different kinds of programs so that these kinds of substances are not readily available?

Hon Mr Patten: My answer to the member is yes, we have. I believe he will appreciate this. I will have to be general because if I am too specific, this gives our hand away somewhat in dealing with some of the individuals who may want to contravene the law by dealing with illicit drugs or alcohol in an inappropriate place.

My answer is yes, indeed, and in fact I would be prepared to share some of that information with the member. I would prefer not to state publicly what some of those are, but I can tell him that in the area of staff training, for observational capacities and skills and for techniques of detection, special training is now taking place for our correctional officers and supervisors.

ASSISTANCE TO RELEASED INMATES

Mr Adams: My question is also for the Minister of Correctional Services. As the minister knows, the Millbrook Correctional Centre is in Peterborough riding. We are seeing a number of men newly released from Millbrook appearing in the city of Peterborough after they have been released, without money. If they have drug or alcohol problems, which they often have, usually they have spent the money they receive as an allowance in the institute before they get to town.

What assistance does the Ministry of Correctional Services provide to inmates who are to be released into the community?

1510

Hon Mr Patten: I want to thank the member for Peterborough. I know he has concerns in this area, which of course we share.

Many people are not aware of the kind of assistance that is given to inmates prior to their release from an institution, and in the member's case, from Millbrook, which is within his riding. I know he has some concerns there, but prior to their release there is very specific counselling on plans of action for that particular inmate. Where is he or she going? In these instances, it would usually be a he. Do they need support services? Will they need some extra money? Do they have transportation funds to go home?

In every one of those particular instances, we will certainly provide the funds from the bank that each inmate has, and we will provide non-refundable vouchers in a sense for in-kind

contributions. That may be a place to stay for a while, or a letter to a welfare office for temporary assistance in order for people to be able to tide over their particular time until they can find a job.

MOTIONS

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES

Mr Ward moved that notwithstanding standing orders 57 and 58, the standing committee on estimates be authorized to present an interim report on the estimates selected in the first round for consideration and that a final report of the remaining estimates to be considered by the committee be presented to the House on or before 28 June 1990.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Mr Ward moved that notwithstanding standing order 94(h), the requirement for notice be waived with respect to ballot items 49 and 50, and that notwithstanding any previous order of the House, Mr McClelland and Mr Daigeler exchange places in the order of precedence for private members' business.

Mr D. S. Cooke: I would like to make a few comments about this motion, and in doing so I would like to use as my backup the McGrath report of 1985 from the federal House. I would also like to be referring during this debate to a book, *The Responsible Government of Ontario*, which outlines the history of this place.

Certainly, I would like to bring into this debate Beauchesne and its comments on private members, and a number of other reports, and books by Donald Macdonald. It has been very interesting reading this morning to go through some of these items in anticipation of this very important debate that is going to come up this afternoon.

I think any motion by the government to change the order of private members' hour brings out discussion on how relevant private members' hour is in the Ontario Legislature, in view of the way the Liberal Party has decided to treat private members' hour in the last several weeks.

Mr Speaker, you will be aware of the upset of the opposition parties when my colleague the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore had her bill on water quality debated; I believe the member for Carleton had his bill debated last week, which was dealing with the Powers of Attorney Act. Those were bills that were very relevant bills and private members' bills that clearly should have been referred to standing committees of the Legislature for proper debate and discussion within the province and within the community. But the Liberal Party again decided to use its majority in the Legislature and block the important role that private members should have in this place.

In reading through some of the books I have referred to, it was of interest and surprise to me to find out that when this place operated in the early 1900s, most of the business that was carried out in the Ontario Legislature was through private members' legislation; it was not through government legislation.

In the year 1900, a year I remember well, 110 bills were introduced in the Ontario Legislature. Twelve were passed and 19 were embodied in other pieces of legislation, for a total of 31 private members' bills becoming law in Ontario in 1900. In 1905, 63 private members' bills were introduced. Ten were passed and two were embodied, for a total of 12. In 1910, it

went up: 75 private members' bills were introduced, 16 passed and 20 were embodied, for a total of 36. The list goes on.

It points out in this book that it was not until the 1950s that the government of the day decided that private members' bills would not be treated as seriously as government bills. They would not be proceeded with and not dealt with, in my view, in an appropriate way.

Liberal Party members will remember when they were in opposition and the Conservative Party was in power, routinely the Conservatives would stand 20 members and block private legislation. The Liberals were outraged, as we were outraged. In fact, it brought about a response that the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party co-operated to block a number of Conservative private members' bills in order to drive home the point that the government of the day was destroying private members' initiatives.

It would seem to me that what the current government has done is exactly the same thing in a roundabout way. Instead of standing the 12 members that are now required under our standing orders, the government allows the legislation to pass for second reading and then kills it by refusing under our rules to allow the bill to be referred out to standing committee.

As you know, Mr Speaker, the provision in our standing orders requires that if a private member's bill is to go out to standing committee, the request can be made by the sponsor of the bill. Then the Speaker puts the question. If a majority of the people present in the House agree, it goes out to committee.

Now the government has taken the position of routinely blocking any referral out to standing committees, thus maintaining complete control of how that bill will be dealt with—not by a committee, not by private members, but by the government House leader.

That is the major difference in how the Liberal Party is dealing with private members' bills. The effect is exactly the same—they kill the bills—but the way of doing it is not quite so obvious to the public and to the majority.

In fact, in Graham White's book—a former staff member of the Legislature, now a professor at the university—he points out that initially in the first couple of years of the Liberal government it treated private members' bills in quite a different way than the Conservatives did and in a very much more progressive way. But since then things have changed considerably and in the last several months the government is treating private members' hour in exactly the same way as the Conservatives did in the past.

I will just quote from Graham White's book: "In the first three years of the Liberal government, they refrained from blocking any private members' business, perhaps because the Liberals remembered their outrage at the Tories' blocking of their bills and resolutions."

He goes on to talk about the ways that private members' bills can be dealt with, and how many bills and resolutions the New Democratic Party and the other parties have introduced in this place.

But suffice it to say that private members' initiatives are very important in the Ontario Legislature and I think the way that the Liberal government is dealing with private members now is completely destroying Thursday mornings, taking the meaning away from them by not allowing private members—whether they be Liberals, New Democrats or Conservatives—to put together initiatives which much work is done on, background is done on, work with community groups to develop the concept, so that second reading debate can take place here and

then more public discussion and consultation can take place out in committee.

Mr Speaker, you will know better than I that in Ottawa there is a process for dealing with private members. The private members' legislation goes out to committee and in some cases private members' legislation is reported back. There is time provided for in the rules for debate on third reading and the private members' initiatives can become law.

1520

One of the better-known pieces of legislation by an opposition party in the private members' initiative to become law was the one initiated by Lynn McDonald, the member for Broadview-Greenwood, on smoking in the workplace, a very important initiative, one that received wide public consultation and eventually became the law of the land.

I am not so much saying that private members' legislation needs to be passed on third reading and become law, but I do object to the government's blocking any ability for the legislation to go out to a standing committee to even have public debate. I do not think that was the intention when the rules were discussed. It certainly was not the intention when the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, and the standing committee on procedural affairs and the standing committee on agencies, boards and commissions before it, studied this matter and made recommendations to the Legislature.

I think we must try to reinforce with the government the need to follow not only the letter of the standing orders that have been passed in the Legislature but the spirit of those standing orders. The spirit of the standing orders and the reforms that were brought about a few years ago clearly was to improve the importance of the individual private member in this Legislature, to make private members' hour an important hour and to allow initiatives by private members to go forward to committee for consultation, for public hearings and for public debate so that either a government initiative comes forward or the bill that is before the committee is discussed, amended and improved and then brought back to the Legislature.

A few weeks ago the government House leader talked to the opposition House leaders about choosing one private member's bill per year from each party to go forward. There is no way that opposition parties are going to agree to that kind of selection being made by three House leaders. That is not the way it is done in Ottawa, and that is not a democratic way of proceeding with private members' bills whatsoever.

I certainly encourage the government, I encourage Liberal backbenchers and certainly I know the Conservatives as well as my party have great concerns on how the government has been handling private members' hour, and I hope that they will see the light and proceed in the spirit of the recommendations and reports that have been done by the Legislative Assembly committee and the procedural affairs committee before it.

I think it was deplorable the way the legislation was handled just a week ago. The member for Carleton had a bill where if there was ever a bill that required public hearings, that was it. We need to have a public discussion on living wills and how medical procedures for people who are dying are imposed under our current system and how we should change legislation so that people's wishes can be carried out. That is a public issue that is being debated all across the world, yet when a proposal is put forward by a private member, as it was, and a proposal made that the matter go out to a standing committee for debate so that the public across the province can be brought into the discussion, the response of the government is no; it blocks it

with its majority. I think it was a shame. It was inappropriate, and it was not in line with the spirit of the rules that we are following in the Legislature and the approach that we are supposed to be taking to private members.

I have no particular objection to the motion that is put before us today, but I do have some concerns about how private members' hour is being proceeded with by the government, and I wanted to get those concerns on the record.

Mr Sterling: Since this debate has been entered into, I think it is only responsible to speak up when, in fact, a week ago this Legislature considered a private member's bill, Bill 131, which was an act amending the Powers of Attorney Act. What bothers me about the government's attitude—which was exhibited by its vote to block Bill 131 after it had passed second reading in this Legislature and prevent it from going out to a committee of the Legislature—what bothers me most about the private members' hour and private members' bills is the fact that by introducing them and by debating them here in the Legislature, we give a false sense of hope to people out there in our communities that in fact a law can be passed which they agree with.

Last week when we were considering Bill 131, members from the group called Dying with Dignity, a group which represents a significant number of people across this province, were here in the gallery. There were approximately a dozen of these people. They had been watching the debate. They had been considering the remarks that were made and they thought that if the bill received second reading in this Legislature there was a real hope that it would become law.

Unfortunately, they were—

The Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the honourable member. I did not have the opportunity to read the motion. I listened to the member for Windsor-Riverside. He finally came around and referred to this. I just wonder how the member is going to tie in the process regarding the exchange of names. I am listening carefully. I am just hoping that he could tie it in.

Hon Mr Ward: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: This motion was discussed by the House leaders. Obviously there is more time for consideration. At this point I would be pleased to withdraw the motion.

Mr D. S. Cooke: On the same point of order, Mr Speaker: I do not see where any discussion by the House leaders would have any relevance at all, because what is promised to us at the House leaders' meeting is withdrawn routinely. The government House leader has no hesitation in lying routinely to the opposition.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Carleton on the same point?

Mr Sterling: I am on the motion, Mr Speaker. It is not our intention to give unanimous consent to allow him to withdraw the motion.

The Speaker: There is not unanimous consent.

Mr Sterling: I would say, and I intend to try to draw this to the motion, that it has some relevance to the motion that was put forward by the House leader, in that there is so little attention now paid to private members' hour and private members' business that the order seems to be able to be shifted week by week almost on a regular basis, because members are no longer putting forward the effort in general. This is not specific to any particular cause or particular member's motion, but it seems that the whole focus on private members' hour is very minimal.

That was emphasized this morning, even, in terms of a division on one member's motion, where I believe that a total of fewer than 40 or close to 40 members voted on a resolution by a member in this Legislature; 40 out of a total of 130 members here in the Legislature.

Getting back to the bill which I had introduced to this Legislature and that has passed second reading, we have a really difficult time going back to our ridings and repelling the cynicism that exists in our ridings with regard to the political process. I believe the method this government is exhibiting, blocking the attempt by a private member to have his bill go out to public hearings and very rarely calling a private member's bill for third reading, really spawns cynicism in the public's mind as to this whole process.

The people who were here last week, the group Dying with Dignity, really believed that there was an opportunity because the Attorney General applauded my first introduction of this bill. They really believed that the Attorney General would act in a generous manner, that this bill was dealing with allowing a person who wanted to appoint someone else to have the right to withdraw or make decisions with regard to medical consents if he was no longer capable of doing that himself. The people who sat in this gallery and the people who wrote to many members of this Legislature really believed that there was an opportunity for that legislation to come about.

1530

Then we had the parliamentary assistant for the Attorney General stand up in this Legislature and make some really specious arguments about why they could not accept Bill 131, and he said that there should be some amendments to it. So I took his word and I said, "Okay, I don't believe that amendments are needed"—it was really a one-section bill, and it is adequate legislation in Nova Scotia—but I took his words and I said: "Well, I'll refer this out to a committee so that in fact the Attorney General or his parliamentary assistant can have the opportunity to listen to the public. They can have input and we can amend this bill." I am quite open about amending the bill. All I am concerned about is the general intent of that piece of legislation.

When I asked the Speaker at that time to put the question to the House as to whether or not I could refer it out to the standing committee on administration of justice of this Legislature, more than 12 Liberals stood in their places and said, "No, you can't refer that out, this is the end of this piece of legislation."

By the very words that the parliamentary assistant for the Attorney General put forward in this Legislature, he indicated to me that this government either thought the idea was too good to give to a member of the opposition or that it was concerned about opposition to the idea and was not willing to face the issue. But they did not even give me, a member of this Legislature, the courtesy to have a fairly non-controversial, non-political bill sent out to a committee of the Legislature so members of the public could in fact have their say.

I have come to the conclusion over this past period of time that this government is so paranoid about this upcoming election and that nothing of controversy be put in front of the public at this time that it is willing to cut off any good ideas that are put forward.

We might as well abandon private members' hour at this time. I do not believe that there is any more use for it. When there is not an opportunity to change the law, to change things, then there is really no sense in raising a false expectation in the

minds of our public that in fact the private member can bring a matter before the Legislature and change things in the province.

I only want to say that that is exemplified by the motion which is put forward by the government House leader today, in that members are not pining or not looking forward anxiously for their time to put forward a matter because we are having so many substitutions. In fact, it almost occurs on a weekly basis.

There are very few members ready with bills or resolutions that they want to put forward, and I can understand that. I can understand it because there really is no sense in having private members' hour on Thursday morning any more. It just does not make sense, unless this government is big enough or strong enough to understand that its generosity would put it in good stead with the electors, whether or not the idea came from the New Democratic Party or the Conservative Party or the Liberal back benches. It does not really matter. When a piece of legislation is passed in this place, 99.9% per cent of the people give the government credit for it anyway, whether it comes from the opposition benches or not.

I am really disappointed in the attitude of the Liberal government now, and I can only attribute it, unfortunately, to the arrogance of 94 members and the fact that they know that they have in their hip pocket the right to squash any good idea and say, "Look, we'll do the same thing as you did, Sterling"—or any other member of this Legislature—"two or three weeks, two or three months from now, and we hope to get the credit and we'll have the Attorney General stand up and say that this a great idea and all the rest."

I think it is unfortunate, because the Attorney General of this province probably represents the largest community in this province which is afflicted with this dreaded disease known as AIDS. This piece of legislation which I introduced in this Legislature would give great comfort to the victims of that dreaded disease, and I think that it not only shows a lack of generosity but in my view it shows a lack of concern to that community by the Attorney General.

The Speaker: You are supporting the motion?

Mr Eves: Speaking to the motion.

The Speaker: Oh. The member for Welland-Thorold.

Mr Kormos moved adjournment of the House.

Mr Callahan: Oh, Peter. You've spent a million and a half of the taxpayers' bucks.

Mr Kormos: Oh, relax. Go back to Brampton South and try to talk to some of your constituents.

The Speaker: Order. Mr Kormos has moved the adjournment of the House.

Hon Mr Ward: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I believe the rotation has not been followed.

Interjections.

Mr D. S. Cooke: There was no Liberal who stood up.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Kormos: You blew it. You got caught with your pants down.

Interjections.

The Speaker: It is hard to believe.

1607

The House divided on Mr Kormos's motion, which was negative on the following vote:

Ayes 6; nays 49.

The Speaker: Any further debate on Mr Ward's motion?

Mr Eves: I just wanted to speak very briefly—and I do mean briefly—to this motion. Yesterday, when the member for Bruce, acting in the place of the government House leader, moved this motion, I rose on a point of order to object. I just want to clarify to all members of the Legislative Assembly that the reason I objected on that date, yesterday, is that when we started this sitting in March, we had agreed among the three House leaders that we would not be so permissive as House leaders had been in the past with respect to making sure that members, with respect to private ballot items, had their private ballot items filed on time, as the rules state.

I pointed out that two members, the member for Riverdale and the member for Cochrane South, had in fact missed their turn because of that policy. I stand to correct the record with respect to the member for Riverdale, because I have now been informed that he did not intend to proceed with respect to a member's private ballot item in any event and so missed his time on purpose. I can say, however, that was not true of the member for Cochrane South, whom I had indicated must do his private ballot item on time or he would lose his spot.

I do understand now that there is not only this particular private ballot item that is before us in the name of the member for Nepean, but the member for Hamilton West has some problems with respect to time as well.

At the House leaders' meeting this morning, at which, I might add, there were only two House leaders, the government House leader and myself concurred that, although we would take a somewhat more permissive approach to this, we felt it necessary that in the future all three caucuses have it before them, in writing, the preceding Tuesday before the week in which the private ballot item would be discussed, available for caucus discussion. In other words, that would be nine days prior to that particular ballot item being discussed.

Now that we have reached some sort of consensus with respect to this matter, I will be supporting the motion of the government House leader.

The Speaker: Further discussion? The member for London South.

Mrs E. J. Smith moved that the House proceed to orders of the day.

Mr D. S. Cooke: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I read, during the recent break, your ruling on this type of a motion. My understanding from your ruling is that the only way this motion can be moved is if the floor is obtained legitimately. We are on a motion; we are debating a motion. There is something already on the floor. I would argue that the member for London South did not get the floor legitimately. If she wants to debate the motion, that is fine, but there is something already on the floor under debate.

The Speaker: I recall very well making the ruling and I ruled that such a motion would be in order, similar to a motion to adjourn the debate or a motion to adjourn the House. I believe that is in the ruling. As the member will know, I recognized a member just now, to debate, and the member moved a motion to—

Mr D. S. Cooke: You can't blame me for trying.

The Speaker: Therefore, I would say that the motion is in order.

The question before the House is, shall the House proceed to orders of the day?

1641

The House divided on Mrs Smith's motion, which was agreed to on the following vote:

Ayes 40; nays 12.

The Speaker: For the information of the members, the previous motion you passed has now been superseded by this motion. That means it is dead.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Mr Ward: Before calling orders of the day, pursuant to standing order 53, the business for the week of 7 May is as follows:

On Monday 7 May, any previously stated unfinished business, which includes resuming the adjourned debate of government notice of motion 30, committee of the whole on Bill 68, and second reading debate of Bills 108, 106, 114, 96 and 107; Tuesday 8 May, continuation of any previously unfinished business; Wednesday 9 May, any previously unfinished business, and the House will not be meeting on Thursday 10 May.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

(continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on government notice of motion 30 on time allocation in relation to Bill 68, An Act to amend certain Acts respecting Insurance.

Mr Runciman: I appreciate the opportunity to continue debate on this most important issue facing Ontarians. Just briefly, for perhaps the information of anyone viewing the proceedings, I want to bring them quickly up to date on what is occurring and what we are dealing with here.

What we are dealing with, Mr Speaker, as you are well aware, is a time allocation motion, an effort on the part of the Liberal government to close off meaningful debate on what is indeed an odious, cynical and fraudulent piece of legislation designed to mislead consumers in this province. I talked at some length on Tuesday with respect to the history of this government's mismanagement of the insurance issue and I will continue along in that vein at some length this evening.

Before I do that, though, I want to mention that the other day I indicated at the outset that I was not going to approach this debate in quite the manner the member for Welland-Thorold did. One of the commitments I made at the outset was that I was not going to talk at length about my dog or any operations my dog may have had in the past. I did make some reference to my dog, the name, etc. and I want to say that in the past couple of days—in fact, the Minister of Financial Institutions has been encouraging me to talk about not only my dog but other family pets. I may take him up on that as the evening proceeds.

I can only say I have had a significant number of phone calls just in the last little while expressing significant concern about Bill 68, and obviously, as well as being opposed to this odious piece of legislation, there are a number of dog lovers who watch the proceedings. There are a few comments incor-

porated in here about my dog, Gabriel, and they are very appreciative of the fact that at least one member of this Legislature truly cares about dogs and the canine species.

I am pleased to see that kind of response, as well as the words of encouragement from people right across this province in respect of encouraging us and all members of the opposition, in both opposition parties, to stick to our guns with respect to opposition to this legislation in an effort to try and get the government to rethink the very dangerous course upon which it has embarked.

A couple of these quickly: From a Rose Eddy in West Hill, "Stop Bill 68." Others indicate they strongly support the opposition. This is from a George Smith in Hamilton. A Mrs Watson in Oshawa—the member for Oshawa is here to hear this. Mrs. Watson wants us to do whatever we can to stop Bill 68. Another one here from a—

An hon member: Al Furlong's mother-in-law?

Mr Runciman: I am not sure; it could be Al Furlong's mother-in-law. Who knows? We will just put that on the record. We know that the member for Oshawa whatever it is, or is it one of the—

Mr Breagh: It is only temporary.

Mr Runciman: Yes, I have trouble with this in any event. Durham Centre: We know the member for Durham Centre has perhaps some reservations about this legislation. I was certainly led to believe that he had. But if he has, he has not up, to this point anyway, stood in the House and voiced them. At some point he will have that opportunity and we will look forward to his taking advantage of it and expressing his concerns on the record, so that his constituents can be fully cognizant of the fact that he is standing up in this Legislature on their behalf. We will look forward to it.

A Maria McDonald from Toronto—it is too bad I do not know all the ridings these people come from; it might help to encourage the members opposite on the government side, the Liberal side, to take a look at the positions they have taken with respect to this legislation—wanting to encourage us to filibuster. Wanting to encourage us to filibuster, Mr Speaker; I am sure you will appreciate hearing that.

There is one rather lengthy one. I do not think I will mention the lady's last name, a Darlene Rose. She is from the Welland-Thorold area and is expressing a great concern about Bill 68. I take it from this that she is not someone who would traditionally support either the Liberal Party or the Progressive Conservative Party. She favours a government-run auto insurance program. She may get her wish with respect to the way this Liberal government is proceeding. I am inferring this from what I have read in this note.

1650

She is also talking about her daughter being a very strong feminist. Apparently she burned her bra at the age of 15 at a women's rights rally. You can see, Mr Speaker, why I do not wish to repeat the last name of this particular individual. She has also expressed concern about the fact that her daughter is working now in Toronto and apparently associating with some disreputable types. Apparently, they are either politicians or members of the insurance industry; I am not sure.

There is also a note here that Darlene Rose is having a birthday this weekend, and I am sure all members of the House would want to wish her a very happy birthday.

I just wanted to reinforce that there are some very real concerns out there. I think that has been indicated over and over

again, time and time again, to the Liberal government. Certainly we are seeing it in the calls that are being made to my office, to the offices of members of our party and to the members of the New Democratic Party. There is a significant degree of concern which is not being heeded.

I think that was reflected in a poll carried out a few weeks ago by Angus Reid Associates, a firm which I gather does polling for the Liberal Party. I understand that is one of the reasons it was retained, so there would be no question whatsoever about its objectivity. It indicated that two thirds of the respondents were very much opposed to what the Liberal government is trying to do in imposing this threshold no-fault program upon the citizens of the province of Ontario.

On Tuesday I talked about the history of this, and I am not going to get into that in any great detail now, but I talked about the Slater report and the fact that it did not take a close look at the auto insurance industry. With a very cursory look indeed, it indicated that it found some appeal in threshold no-fault.

Following the tabling and issuance of that report, the Liberal government then appointed Justice Coulter Osborne of the Supreme Court of Ontario to carry out a very thorough investigation of auto insurance. As I said earlier, I think it was without doubt the most comprehensive study of the issue in the history of North America.

During the course of that study being carried out by Justice Osborne, the leader of the Liberal Party, the Premier, made what was indeed a very rash, irresponsible promise in September 1987, simply for short-term political gain, when he indicated that he had a very specific plan to lower automobile insurance rates in this province. It has been very clearly indicated over the course of the past number of years that he had no such plan and that he in fact misled the electorate of the province of Ontario.

Up to this point, he has not had to suffer any significant degree of regret over that misleading of the electorate, because the polls show that the Liberal Party still remains high in public opinion. That mystifies me; but it is there, it is a fact of life, and we have to live with it. We hope that at some point the good folks in the province of Ontario are going to very critically analyse the record of this government and specifically the record of the Premier when he made a promise which he knew he could not keep. He had no facts upon which to make that commitment and has led us into severe difficulties with the auto insurance business in this province over the past couple of years because of that very irresponsible, misleading promise that he made in September 1987. It has cost us millions and millions of dollars.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Cureatz): Misleading? Come on.

Mr Runciman: Mr Speaker, you are expressing concern about my using the word "misleading." I will withdraw it. I want to put it on the record following your guidance. I am prepared to withdraw it. But I want to say that on public platforms I have used stronger language. Out of respect for this institution, I am not going to use it in this place, but I want to say that it is very clear in respect to what the Premier said in September 1987 and what has transpired in the interim. Obviously he made a promise which has not been kept, to say the very least.

He made that promise during the course of this very expensive and thorough investigation by Justice Osborne, an investigation that cost us \$1.4 million as taxpayers. During the course of that, the Minister of Financial Institutions introduced a bill in this Legislature, Bill 2, An Act to establish the Ontario

Automobile Insurance Board, perhaps the most massive intervention in the private sector in the history of this province, brought about by the four key players, I think, in the front benches of the Liberal Party, most of whom have no difficulty whatsoever with the idea of significant government intervention in the private sector. It does not bother them a whit; not one whit. They have done it before; they will do it again.

I want to say to the folks in the insurance industry who are tripping over themselves to support this legislation, they had better be very cautious in respect to this Liberal government, because it will have no reservations whatsoever to sell them down the river; no reservations whatsoever. To small insurance brokers right across this province, let me tell you, if this Liberal gang thinks it is in its best short-term political interest to cut the rug out from under you, kneecap you, do whatever it has to do, if it means being government-run, selling insurance out of motor vehicle licence bureaus, they will do it overnight.

The Liberals do not care about you. They do not have a principle in respect to a concern about the private sector. The record shows it. John Bulloch says they are the most antibusiness government in Canada. Let's put that on the record: the most antibusiness government in Canada. I want to say to the industry—the private, small business people in every community in this province—insurance brokers, for whom I have a great deal of respect, that they had better be very cautious, very concerned. If we come back into this Legislature with another Liberal government following the provincial election—God forbid—those people are going to be in severe difficulties. They are not going to have a party committed to the free enterprise system, not at all. They are going to have a party committed to political expediency and that is it. That is the bottom line; nothing more, nothing more.

Mr Villeneuve: They have proved that time and again.

Mr Runciman: Time and time and time again.

I was talking about the establishment of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board through Bill 2. During the course of Justice Osborne's hearings, hearings which were costing all of us as taxpayers a significant amount of money, not to mention the establishment of this board, the significant bureaucracy that went along with it, the plush office quarters that they established in New—North York, plush quarters. North York.

Hon Mr Elston: New York? You're a little bit out.

Mr Runciman: Well, we do not travel around the world like members of the executive council at the public trough. If the minister wants to raise that question, let's take a look at his travel expenditures. Let's look at Japan, China, etc., Italy. Let's talk about the trip to Italy last year. How many Liberal members went on that trip to Italy—10 or 12 Liberal members?

Mr Speaker, I appreciate your interventions. I want to say, though, I hope you respect at the same time the interventions and interjections that are coming across the floor. When they start talking about these sorts of things, I think it behooves me to respond, to set the record straight, to make sure that the public of Ontario understands just where this Liberal government is coming from.

Reluctantly I deviate from the bill, and I will try to minimize that during the course of the next period of time. But I can only do that with the assistance of the Liberal members, so I will encourage them to help me out in that way.

Talking about Justice Osborne's study, which ultimately ended up costing us somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$1.4 million, Bill 2 was introduced in this House, establishing the board. That bureaucracy was established, the cost associated

with it, the moneys were spent. Justice Osborne subsequently reported in February 1988, some six months, I think, after this government had committed itself to a totally different course of action.

1700

So I talked about the history of Bill 2, the establishment of the insurance board, the way the government treated the public with respect to that issue and the fact that it ignored the facts of Massachusetts, on which it had information it was privy to. They ignored the information of Massachusetts, the only jurisdiction with a comparable system in place, which had failed. They also ignored the advice of expert witnesses with respect to the classification changes that were being proposed, and they ignored them at a cost of millions and millions of dollars to the insurance industry.

Again, I think I have to relate this to what has been happening in the past number of months with this bill that we are now dealing with and the similarities in the way they handled Bill 2 and Bill 68, both dealing with the auto insurance issue, where we had important reports withheld from the committee, we had important reports like the Massachusetts report tabled on the last day of public hearings, witness after witness ignored. It was really a window-dressing exercise to say to the public, "Look, we are having public hearings; we are indeed listening to the public." But the reality was that there was no effort whatsoever to listen. I will get back to that and draw that into Bill 68 and what we are talking about here today in the near future.

Following that, as I said, the rate classification changes which this government proposed cost the industry millions of dollars. The insurance board spent millions of dollars gearing up for it, bringing in rate recommendations based on the rate classification changes, handed them to the minister in the spring of 1988 and the minister, again, with the crisis management style of this government, flying by the seat of its pants, panicked. He had that information before him eight or nine months prior, but he waited until the board had spent millions and millions of taxpayers' dollars and presented the report in front of him before he accepted the fact that historically safe drivers in this province, senior citizens, lady drivers 30 and over, were going to be hit with significant increases, some with up to 80% or 90% increases in their insurance rates. Then he panicked for political reasons and flushed away all of the money that had been spent up to that point: the Osborne report, \$1.4 million; approximately \$8 or \$9 million at that point by the insurance board, all flushed down the toilet; all taxpayers' money totally wasted.

When we look at what is happening around this province with food banks still being operated during a period of booming economy over the last five or six years, when we have seen this government spending at a clip significantly above any other government in Canada, increasing spending at the rate of over 10% per year, when we see tax increases in 1988 and 1989 of \$1 billion plus, when we see the civil service mushrooming while this Liberal government is in office—8,000 new civil servants—and we see them flushing \$11 million of taxpayers' money down the toilet in this useless exercise with the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board and we are having people line up at food banks, it is shameful. But we do not see any embarrassment over there; we do not hear any voices of regret, none at all.

I talked about the process. I am now up to Bill 68. The first effort at deception is to call this the Ontario motor vehicle driver protection act. This is in no way, shape or form protect-

ing the drivers of this province; quite the opposite, and the government's own actuarial studies clearly indicate that. The actuarial studies that were tabled on the last day of public hearings, I think some 39 of them, the government's own studies, indicated there was going to be a net loss in benefits to the consumers of this province of 47.7%; a net loss in benefits—are members listening over there?—of close to 50%; a net loss in benefits to the drivers of this province because of this government's no-fault initiative of close to 50%.

What are they getting for that? They are losing almost half their benefits. They are not getting any reduction in rates, no reduction in rates whatsoever. They are reducing their benefits, cutting their benefits almost in half, not reducing the rates. In some areas they are saying they are levelling off. In other areas we are going to average 8%. The minister makes public statements that some drivers who are driving bigger cars are going to be looking at 20% or 25% rate increases. That is what they are talking about, rate increases of up to 25%, with almost a 50% cut in benefits.

Mr Furlong: How do you figure 50%? Explain that.

Mr Runciman: I do not have to explain that. The government members simply have to look at their own actuarial studies. It is in black and white.

The member for Durham Centre is getting agitated over there. He sat in on the committee. He sat in on the committee briefly. I do not remember him taking the charge in respect to this legislation, not at all. He very quietly expressed his concerns and then got out of there as quickly as he could. He beat a hasty retreat back to Oshawa. He had an opportunity there to sit through those hearings. He had an opportunity to become extremely familiar with that legislation. He had an opportunity to go through those actuarial studies. He had an opportunity to understand this legislation, and he did not, he beat it at the first opportunity. But now he is sitting here in the House and the member for Durham Centre has the gall—

Interjection.

Mr Runciman: He would like to be a senator, yes. He has the gall to sit here today and ask me to explain this, when he had the opportunity. He sat on that committee. He was an appointee to that committee and he beat a hasty retreat. He decided that it was not in his best long-term political interests, I guess, to be sitting through that exercise. It is difficult to lend any credibility to his interjections here today when he had the opportunity to play a very active role in this hearing process and he declined to do so.

I have just been passed a message here. I do not want to get into a debate with the member for Durham Centre, but I will let him reflect upon this anyway, and if he wants to send me a message—because I do not want to get into a debate with him. “Ask the member what the lawyers in his riding think about this.” I do not know. I am not sure where that came from, but in any event, it would be nice to know if he wants to at some point—

Mr Furlong: It came from Allan McLean.

Mr Runciman: No. Maybe under members' statements he may want to get up and review the opinions of his brethren. He may want to get up and comment on that at some point in the future, but I am not going to hold my breath, because he has had all kinds of opportunities and we have not had the opportunity to hear from him. He wants to sit in the House—I guess he does not have much else to do today, apparently.

There must be some constituent business to look after. I want to make an appeal to the constituents in Durham Centre, if there is anyone watching out there from Durham Centre. Their member is sitting in the House here today heckling someone who is representing thousands and thousands of people who are concerned about what this Liberal government is doing. That is what the member is using this available time for. He is not here apparently making any interventions on behalf of, I assume, many people in his own riding who have concerns about this legislation. No, he is trying to give me a rough time.

I am just here doing my job, and it is rough when you look at what this government is doing to us, and—right back on to this bill, Mr Speaker—we are talking about restriction of opportunities for the opposition. We have very few, 19 in the NDP, 17 in the Conservative caucus, and we have 94 Liberals over there, the largest majority government in the history of Ontario, and we have this kind of odious legislation introduced, restricting us to two days of discussion in committee of the whole House of this legislation—two days.

1710

Our party has a significant number of amendments we want to introduce. All the members of our caucus would like to speak on this bill. I am sure all the members of the NDP would like to speak on this bill. We are only talking about 30-some opposition members who are being refused the opportunity to express the concerns of thousands and thousands of Ontarians in this Legislature. Those interests are not being expressed by those 94 Liberal members; they are toeing the line. The Liberal leader has said, “This is the way it's going to be, boys and girls,” and you do not hear them saying boo. We thought there were a few of them there who had a little intestinal fortitude, but that has not proven to be the case.

I talked about the committee proceedings and I talked about the role of the Liberal members on that committee. I think this is an opportunity, because I am indeed addressing the bill and the restrictions on opportunities for full debate of this legislation and the fact that really, in essence, there are only two people who are going to have any opportunity for significant involvement in this, and that is the member for Welland-Thorold, the insurance critic for the NDP, and myself, as the insurance critic for the Progressive Conservative Party. Everyone else is cut out of this debate, essentially, in any meaningful way.

All of those people who appeared before us who were ignored—over 90% of the witnesses appearing before us who were opposed to this legislation—in essence, their testimony was ignored and they are being ignored through this legislation in the Legislature, introduced by the Liberal government, which will not permit all the members to get those concerns on the record.

We are talking about the head-injured, for example, those concerned about the exclusion of psychological injury from the threshold of this no-fault legislation. There is a host of concerns when you look at the only perhaps 3% to 4% to 5%, once this legislation passes, who will have the ability to sue, who will have the ability to take an at-fault driver to court. We are only talking about 4% or 5% of innocent accident victims who are going to have the right to take an at-fault driver to court if this no-fault legislation the Liberal government has introduced goes through. That is the reality.

On top of that, as I said, the actuarial studies are talking about a net loss in benefits of 47.7%. I will take the opportunity

tomorrow to send the figures, to send the report to the member, just so that he is brought up to date.

Mr Furlong: You said 50 before. Now you're being more accurate.

Mr Runciman: I said close to 50.

I chastised a couple of Liberal members of the committee in respect to what transpired. I am not going to get heated up about that, I hope. I have been heated up about that in the past, and I think that people understand, hopefully, my views in respect to this, that I was indeed agitated, to say the least, in respect to what happened during those committee hearings and the fact that we had some very moving testimony before us which was not heeded, which was not listened to.

I think those of us in the opposition could have lived with what happened in the end result in respect to the government having its way, and I think if the members of the committee had participated in a meaningful way and in a way that indicated their genuine concern, genuine sincerity, about many of the witnesses appearing before us, I think we could have lived with that. But we had people who were simply—I do not know where they came upon the questions that they asked, but they were the most inane, no real legitimate concern being expressed, no intent whatsoever to address all of these various witnesses, people who in many instances had no vested interest, had nothing whatsoever to gain by either the passage of this legislation or the failure of this legislation. They were there before us, many of them innocent accident victims who had suffered their injuries in the past, because they were concerned about future innocent accident victims in this province if this no-fault legislation goes through. They were there because they had a genuine concern, a real feeling for people.

To see the way those witnesses were treated by the Liberal members of that committee was scandalous, was nothing less than scandalous, and it bothered me deeply, Mr Speaker. I am being quite sincere about this, and you know I am. It bothered me in the committee. I lost my temper in the committee during an effort to try to not allow a witness to have 15 minutes to comment on 39 stacks of studies that the government had in its hands and did not give us access to until the last day of public hearings, and then tried to cut off an expert witness from 15 minutes of testimony. After I had given up my questioning time to allow him to do that, we had the Liberal member for York Mills try to cut it off—39 studies, some very significant, important studies, and I indicated one of their findings, perhaps the most important finding, in terms of the net loss of benefits, and we could not have a critical witness in respect to what those studies meant to us as Ontarians. We had an effort by the member for York Mills to cut that off. The only way he did not succeed is that he was the only Liberal member of the committee who was present at that time, so they could not carry the vote.

I lost my temper. I used language which I have since apologized for, but I want to make sure, certainly, that the people of the province who may have witnessed that, because it received some publicity, understand the reasons behind my words that day and the strong feelings that I have in respect to the way very concerned people who appeared before us were treated by the Liberal members of that committee.

Mr Dietsch: How did you feel about the way Mr Kormos handled the insurance company guy, Bob? Do you want to talk about that one?

Mr Runciman: I am not going to get into that sort of thing. I was not present for most of that particular day the

member is talking about. I approach things in my way, other members approach them in their way. That is all there is to it. I am not going to get into any critical analysis of any other member of the opposition.

Hon Mr Elston: I thought that was what you were doing now.

Mr Runciman: Well, about members of the government I have no reservations. We are talking about a government bill before this House. We are talking about a government bill before this House to restrict the time of debate on what I consider to be one of the most important issues facing the people of Ontario right now, and obviously the government shares that belief or it would not have this dominating the agenda in terms of the House. So for members to suggest that I should start discussing the actions of another opposition member—I would be out of order, so I am not going to do it. I do not want to be out of order. I never want to be out of order.

I want to talk about the government members. I want to make sure that the people who are being served, supposedly, by these individuals understand the kinds of positions they took during this hearing.

I must say, the member for York Mills seemed to be the chief whip and chief cook and bottle washer on the committee for the Liberal Party.

Again, some of the questions that were posed to people like Jeremy Rempel, who appeared in a wheelchair, a young man who suffered a most serious accident, and again, as I want to reiterate, someone who is genuinely concerned about innocent accident victims. He and his father appeared. We had witness after witness after witness like that who was treated with utter disdain by the Liberal members of that committee; as I said, the inane comments they would make, the totally irrelevant comments, and no expression of concern about amending this legislation to address their very real and legitimate and heartfelt concerns.

I mentioned the member for Etobicoke West and her concerns about a remark I made which she construed to be a reference to a particular Liberal cabinet minister.

Hon Mr Elston: I thought you weren't going to talk about members.

Mr Runciman: I am talking about members of the committee and I want their constituents, I want the people of Ontario, to understand the approach that these people took when they had an opportunity to deal in a meaningful way with this very important piece of legislation. I want the people of Ontario to understand where the Liberal members' priorities lie. I want them to understand.

They did not want to have meaningful debate, they did not want to have witnesses appear who could in an expert fashion scrutinize the massive piles of documents placed before us, and the member for Etobicoke West, her longest intervention during the committee process was a 15- or 20-minute diatribe against me in an effort to, I do not know, ingratiate herself with members of the executive council. I do not know; I mean, it was difficult to fathom.

When you have witnesses appearing before you with such moving testimony that I think on many occasions members were at the point of tears—some members were in tears because of these moving stories being told to us about accidents and the suffering of innocent accident victims in this province—and then we have this member for Etobicoke West devote 20 minutes to a verbal assault on me because she inferred that I said something negative about a member of the Liberal cabinet.

That was her priority. That was the most important issue for her, that she send out a message to that Liberal cabinet minister:

"Look, I was trying to defend you in the committee. I hope you appreciate that and whenever the decisions come to elevate someone to a parliamentary assistant, or into the cabinet level, I'm sure that I will be well thought of when that time arises."

1720

I do not know if that is the rationale behind what she did. In any event, I do know that was her contribution to the debate, and it makes one pause, to say the very least, in respect to what those people were doing there and how they feel about their actions in respect to that process, because they were simply nothing more than rubber stamps, sheep following the direction of a leader who had made a promise in 1987 which he has never ever come close to fulfilling.

My memory may be faulty, so I stand to be corrected on this, but the member for Mississauga East was another member of that committee who, again, was there solely to follow the direction of the Treasurer and act as a rubber stamp.

I believe the member for Don Mills served as a member of that committee.

Mr Velshi: Talk about Jeremy, Bob. He would have been better under Bill 68 and you know that, Bob.

Mr Runciman: He is agitated that I am mentioning his riding. I am not making any reference to his personal characteristics whatsoever. He may indeed be a fine gentleman, but I am saying that he and other colleagues who served as representatives of the governing Liberal Party on that committee have an awful lot to answer to, not only to their constituents, but the broader constituency, the people of Ontario, because they failed them, they very miserably failed them.

When we take a look at this legislation—and the reality is it is probably going to go through unless we have an election in the interim—the people of Ontario are eventually going to realize, hopefully, how badly treated they were by the Liberal members of that committee and by the Liberal government as a whole, but more specifically by the Liberal backbenchers who have been very, very reluctant. Despite immense pressure placed upon them by their constituents, by Liberal riding associations and by a host of people in their own professional associations, they have decided that it is not in their best political interests to take a public stand on this issue.

That is sad, it is regrettable and it is one of the reasons why I think so many people across this country are becoming disillusioned with politics. We see this sort of party discipline, this iron hand of government, being applied to people like this who were elected to represent their constituents, but when it comes to something like this they will not do it for fear of retribution from the top, that the Premier is going to hit them hard over the head or, for that matter, that Mr Mulroney in Ottawa is going to hit them over the head. We have seen that happen, and I think that is one of the reasons the people of this country are becoming so disillusioned with politics and with government.

The fact that people like this are not prepared, because of the strength of party discipline in this province and in this country, to stand up, take an independent stand and speak up on behalf of the people they are supposed to be representing is very regrettable indeed. As I said, at the outset of these committee hearings I was optimistic that we were going to see a few Liberal members take a strong stand, but it did not happen, it just did not happen. It is very regrettable and it is very sad.

Again, as I have said, there does not appear to be any embarrassment on that side of the House, but there should be. And at some point, when they reflect back upon their careers as legislators—and for many of them they may be very brief careers if their constituents become aware of what they are doing or not doing in this Legislature—they are going to be very sad about their failure to act on this particular piece of legislation, because it is going to come back to haunt all of us in this province.

I just have to say when people have a member of their family or someone close to them, someone they know, who is in a very serious auto accident and then has to reap the rewards of this no-fault legislation they have brought in, when only 3% to 5% of them will have the ability to take an at-fault driver to court, then it is going to come back at those members of the Liberal Party who failed to stand up and be heard on behalf of the people they are supposed to be representing.

I want to talk briefly about Liberals and the Liberal Party and some of the things that have been occurring within the party which I think are relevant and again indicate how arrogant this government has become in a very short period of time. I am talking about four and a half years in power. It is unbelievable when we look at the auto insurance issue. It is just one example where we had the government make a decision in respect to this threshold no-fault behind closed doors with a handful of people: insurance industry advisers, we have to assume a handful of bureaucrats and hopefully one or two elected officials, but we cannot be sure of that.

At the same time we had parallel public hearings going on which were nothing more than smoke and mirrors to deceive the public that there was really a public effort here, an opportunity for the public to be heard on what the government was going to do in respect to product reform. At the same time those public hearings were going on, at a cost of millions of dollars to taxpayers, the Liberal government and a few of its cronies were behind back doors cooking up this kind of deal, cooking up what is the toughest piece of insurance legislation in North America, the most restrictive threshold of any no-fault insurance legislation in North America.

I want to point to, as I said, what has happened to this government. When it came into office in 1985—and we all remember 26 June 1985—it came in with the promises of an open government, a caring government, a government that was going to listen to the people. They are not listening to the people now; they are not listening to the people at all. As a matter of fact, they are not even listening to the Liberal Party members, the grass roots of their own party, they are not listening to even the grass roots. We have a handful of élite or so-called élite, élite in their own minds in any event, who are making the decisions on behalf of this government, on behalf of these 90-some rubber-stampers who sit behind them, making all of the decisions.

Hon Mr O'Neil: You'll never get anywhere being personal.

Mr Runciman: I am stating the facts. I am not being personal; I am stating the facts. That is the reality.

Mr Dietsch: I spoke so highly of you, Bob, but this is changing rapidly, I want you to know.

Mr Runciman: I think it is important to put on the record that we have Liberal members yelling across the floor that what I am saying is not accurate, that the grass roots—

Hon Mr O'Neil: We are saying you are being personal.

Mr Runciman: No—that the grass roots of the party are not upset about this legislation, that they are not hearing from rank-and-file members of their own party that they do not like what they are doing with this no-fault legislation.

Mr Faubert: Who said that? Name names.

Mr Runciman: I have been asked who said that. Just a few. The Nipissing Liberal riding executive—

Mr Faubert: Nipissing?

Mr Runciman: Nipissing. Does the member know that riding?

Mr Faubert: Yes.

Mr Runciman: It is one of the few that is not held by the Liberal Party of Ontario. They have conveyed their concerns to the Premier's office about no-fault legislation being brought in by their Liberal friends at Queen's Park. The Sudbury Liberal Riding Association—its member is Mr Campbell.

Hon Mr Elston: The member for Sudbury.

Mr Runciman: Sudbury what? I want to find out.

Hon Mr Elston: Just Sudbury.

Mr Runciman: Just Sudbury?

Hon Mr Elston: Sudbury. Not "just Sudbury," but Sudbury.

Miss Martel: The Sudbury East Liberal Riding Association voted against it.

1730

Mr Runciman: I am going to mention that the Sudbury East Liberal Riding Association passed a resolution, as did, as I said, the Liberal riding association in Sudbury, which Mr Campbell is the member for. Before I go beyond the Sudbury riding association, I want to talk about the member for Sudbury and what his response to his own riding association was. He scoffed at it. He said:

"That doesn't mean anything to me. Who are these guys? They're only my association. Who do they think they are, telling me and telling my colleagues at Queen's Park that they don't like this piece of legislation? Talk about gall—my executives telling me they don't like a particular piece of legislation."

He just scoffed at them. The arrogance is infectious. It is rapidly spreading into the back benches when we have a Liberal member telling his own association:

"I don't care what you tell me. Go on, you bunch of jokers. I don't want to listen to you. I'll do what I am going to do. I'll do what Mr Peterson tells me to do. That's what I am going to do. That is all I am going to do. If Mr Peterson says, 'Jump,' I'll jump. If Mr Peterson says something else, I'll do something else. That's it. I want to be in cabinet, I want to be a parliamentary assistant, I want to be chairman of the Liquor Licence Board of Ontario or something."

Mr Dietsch: So do I.

Mr Runciman: There are a lot of volunteers for that one.

It is pretty sad when we see the members treating their own executives in that manner. But as I said, it personifies the arrogance of this government and the fact that it has gotten away from its early promises of being open and consultative. They have not done it. They have done this deal behind closed doors with their insurance industry buddies who, I might say, are not going to be buddies for much longer. If this government deems it not in its best interest, it will kick them out the door in a flash.

If this Liberal government does not think it is in its best interest to any longer be buddy-buddy with the insurance industry, it will be: "Open the door. Give them the boot. Nationalize the industry."

Hon Mr Elston: Let's see those boots again.

Mr Runciman: No cowboy boots here.

Mr Furlong: Are those your Guccis?

Mr Runciman: I have got my slippers just in case, though.

I mentioned the Sudbury East Liberal Riding Association. Now I want to mention the letter from the member for Windsor-Walkerville, Mr Ray. Some of you may recall that there was quite a significant discussion about that at the time the committee went to Windsor.

Hon Mr Elston: Bob, I like your Mulroney glasses better.

Mr Runciman: You like my Mulroney glasses? I am sorry, I left them in the office. We will see if a page might go down. I want to keep the Minister of Financial Institutions happy, no doubt about it.

In any event, I thought I had that letter from Mr Ray, but I do not see it close at hand.

An hon member: Is that Bob Rae?

Mr Runciman: No, Michael Ray, the member for Windsor-Walkerville, who was expressing significant concerns about Bill 68 and no-fault auto insurance. Then the committee went into Windsor, and we thought, we hoped, we assumed that the member for Windsor-Walkerville would be there. Here we were in Windsor dealing with an issue which he had publicly expressed concern about, but he was not there; he did not show up—"otherwise occupied."

Again, the heavy hand of the Premier's office had intervened, regrettably. I like the gentleman; he seems to be a very fine individual. But I understand the pressures of party discipline were apparently too much for him to make an appearance in his own city.

Mr Furlong: Do you know that for a fact?

Mr Faubert: Prove it.

Mr Ferraro: That's not true, Bob.

Mr Faubert: Not true.

Mr Runciman: Those charges, if you want to describe them as such, were made in Windsor during the hearings, expressions of concern:

"Where is the member? We'll delay the hearings, we'll prolong the hearings so that he can be here. Let's find out. Let's get on the phone. Let's get him here."

But it did not occur. I know the minister would never do that, certainly never during his days in opposition.

Hon Mr Elston: Listen, did you appear in front of the committee on Bill 179 when the representatives of your OPSEU local came to speak to it?

Mr Runciman: Is this relevant, Mr Speaker?

Hon Mr Elston: It sure is. I just thought I'd ask the question.

Mr Runciman: I do not think I was made aware of that appearance. The member for Windsor-Walkerville, for whatever reasons, did not appear, and it is regrettable, regrettable indeed.

I want to talk about the member for Hamilton Centre. This member was on the committee for the duration of the hearings. I indicated on Tuesday that she was one Liberal member for

whom I had some hope in respect to her approach to the witnesses, because she had a background in dealing with the head-injured. She had expressed concern publicly about issues that were relevant to this legislation.

But when the time came to really put the rhetoric into action, perhaps she was the most disappointing for me personally, because I held out such high hope for her. She is someone who had been turfed from cabinet, so one can ask why she was toeing the party line and not expressing in committee the concerns that she had publicly expressed about the head-injured, the individuals excluded from threshold for psychological injury. Why was she not dealing with that in committee? One had to ask that question.

I expected, because of her exclusion from cabinet and the very strong likelihood that she will never ever have another opportunity to get back into cabinet, that she would take that opportunity to take a strong stand and stand up for what she believed in, stand up for those head-injured individuals who appeared before us, who expressed very serious concern about future innocent accident victims.

She failed to do so; she failed miserably. Her questions were offensive to witnesses and offensive to those of us on the opposition benches who were so moved by the testimony. I guess the performance of the member for Hamilton Centre most affected me in terms of disappointment, and I say that quite sincerely. I am not saying that for political reasons. I am saying it because those were my quite sincere feelings during the course of that proceeding, because of what she said earlier, what she had publicly said, and looking at her background.

If there was one member of that committee we hoped would be more sympathetic to the testimony we were hearing, it was the member for Hamilton Centre, but it did not happen. Now she is reaping the whirlwind from her lack of effort. She is facing what the Globe and Mail has called a revolt within her own riding association.

I want to mention also the member for Wentworth North. The member apparently is also facing significant unrest within his own association, a possible challenge to his nomination as a result of this bill and as a result of the government's failure to listen to the people of the province and to even listen to their own members, the members of the Liberal riding associations across this province.

We have members like the member for Sudbury treating his own executive with complete disdain. We have these other members simply refusing to pay any attention whatsoever to their constituents, not even to their own Liberal riding association members. As a result, there is considerable unrest within the Liberal Party.

The member for Wentworth North could be challenged for nomination. We are talking about a lot of nominations coming up in the next little while. Perhaps some of the members across may reflect upon that and the strong feelings out there about this bill. They may indeed be facing some difficulties within their own associations as a result.

Hon Mr Elston: What about you, Bob, this time?

Mr Runciman: No problems whatsoever.

Hon Mr Elston: What's Stephen doing this time?

Mr Runciman: He might be my campaign manager. We will just have to wait and see.

Hon Mr Elston: He just might. He may be managing a campaign.

Mr Runciman: I talked about a group called PAIN, People Against the Insurance Nightmare. They appeared to be at the Liberal meeting in Hamilton—no, it was in Windsor I believe, a few weeks ago. They sent out a letter. They had a handout for all the Liberals and this letter is about Liberals in PAIN. They wanted to get on to the convention floor with the issue but apparently, for whatever reasons, they were unable to do so.

I am not going to read all of this letter into the record but I want to say that it is written by a gentleman by the name of Norman White. He is enclosing a Globe and Mail article which has to do with the problems faced by the member for Hamilton Centre. He says:

"You should know that even the people who were asked to attend the meeting by Dr Munro spoke against the bill. Apart from Liberals who are cabinet members or spokespersons for cabinet members, I have not met one Liberal to date who believes this legislation is fair or sound."

1740

This is written on behalf of Liberals in the Hamilton area and signed by a Norman White, who apparently has some very strong credentials in the Liberal Party. He is a committed Liberal worker, a doctor who has worked for many years with the head-injured.

Making brief reference to the Globe and Mail article dealing with the problems the member for Hamilton Centre is facing in her own constituency, he says:

"The Hamilton Centre revolt against Bill 68 emerged at a constituency association meeting Thursday night. Association president David Helson said, 'No one, no one spoke in favour of Bill 68,' even though 70 association members turned out for the meeting and 'attendance,' he said, 'was surprisingly large.' Mr Helson said that although he has been involved in politics for a number of years, he has never seen an issue as contentious as auto insurance."

That is the president of the Hamilton Centre Liberal Riding Association.

I also want to put on record what I think are some important pieces of communication, and they tie into what I have been talking about. I gather the member for Welland-Thorold made a reference to a Mr Turkstra. I do not know if he is paying attention, but he made reference—

Mr Kormos: On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: What is out of order?

Mr Kormos: The Liberal government is out of order here in the province of Ontario. I am paying attention to what the member is saying. Why are the Liberals not paying attention? They might learn something.

Mr Runciman: I thought that was an excellent point of order. I inquired because I wanted confirmation that it was indeed Mr Turkstra, a very prominent Liberal.

"As you know, I have been a member of the Wentworth North Liberal Riding association for a number of years, a strong supporter of Chris Ward, a committed worker for the party since 1957." Herman Turkstra. "What this issue shows is that it is long overdue for us to look at the role of Liberal members of the Legislature, to look at the immense pressure now being placed on the members of caucus to toe the party line."

I understand rumour has it that Herman Turkstra is now suffering and is going to suffer as a result of going public on this, that there has been a clear indication that very strong pressure is going to be brought to bear on Mr Turkstra. Indeed if there were any rewards in the future that might have been

forthcoming, Mr Turkstra can now forget about those possible rewards because he had the unmitigated gall to speak out publicly against this terrible piece of legislation.

Mr Kormos: He's got guts. Call it the way it is.

Mr Runciman: He had some guts, unlike the 90-some sheeplike backbenchers in the Liberal government. Here is a Liberal party supporter since 1957 who has worked extremely hard, who has worked his fingers to the bone for the Liberal Party of Ontario, and he has the guts to get up and say: "Look, I don't like this legislation. It's going to hurt innocent accident victims in the province of Ontario." And what happens? The heavy hand of the Liberal Party falls upon him.

I want to talk about a fellow by the name of William Morris, QC. He is a member of the firm Morris, Waxman, Carpenter-Gunn, out of Hamilton, Ontario. He was indicating how strong a supporter he has been. Again, the government House leader is his sitting member.

"I voted for him in every provincial election. His campaign sign occupied a prominent place on my property, and I have encouraged friends and acquaintances to support him in the provincial Liberal Party. I have also provided other Liberal members with financial support. It therefore came as a complete shock to me when the Honourable Murray Elston introduced this draconian legislation last September."

I am not going to read all of this, just a few highlights. This is very relevant to the performance of the Liberal backbenchers on the committee. Again, I quote:

"I quickly learned that the committee hearings were a joke. There were 11 members of the committee, being composed of two members of the Progressive Conservative Party and two members of the New Democratic Party. There could never be meaningful recommendations made from this committee because the seven Liberal members of the committee—and it became apparent from their questions and comments—were only interested in promoting the government's position and not entering into legitimate analysis of the bill."

This is very interesting. It reminded this gentleman of the words of the late brilliant lyricist, W. S. Gilbert of Gilbert and Sullivan fame, from the operetta *HMS Pinafore*: "I always voted at my party's call. I never thought of thinking for myself at all." How accurate and how fitting for the performance of the Liberal backbenchers on that committee. No apparent willingness to think for themselves or to speak up and act on behalf of their constituents, let alone the people of Ontario and, most important, the innocent accident victims who are going to suffer in a dramatic fashion because of this Liberal government's arrogant introduction of this dangerous piece of legislation.

There is another paragraph I want to put on the record from this gentleman, Mr Morris, QC, of Hamilton. Again, he might as well forgo any aspirations he might have had for appointments or favours from this Liberal government. We know how they treat anyone who has the intestinal fortitude to criticize them publicly: "Cut them off. Pull the rug out from under them. That's it. We won't look their way again in the future."

I want to quote Mr Morris again: "Today I consider myself to be a disillusioned, dismayed and disgusted Liberal. The actions of this Liberal government with respect to Bill 68 have been reprehensible. They have lost contact with reality. Bill 68 prejudices the weak and the disadvantaged." He is urging us, the Progressive Conservative, and the NDP to continue our strong opposition to Bill 68.

Unlike most Liberals, certainly key Liberals in this government, this gentleman is a believer in the free enterprise system.

He certainly has been supporting the wrong party in the past. He simply has to look at the significant intervention of this government in the private sector with respect to Bill 2 and the establishment of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board.

Again, he is encouraging a free vote in the Legislature. That is a laugh. We would love to see a free vote. In essence, he is encouraging us to continue the battle against Bill 68, another brave Liberal who has the guts to stand up and publicly criticize this government, unlike the 90-some members who are unwilling to take that kind of stand.

Interjections.

Mr Runciman: I heard some language from across the floor which, I would suggest, was totally unparliamentary.

Mr Faubert: Name it.

Mr Kormos: Yes, but it was coming from a horse's ass.

Mr Faubert: You're the biggest one.

Mr Runciman: I do not know if the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere is sitting in his seat.

Mr Faubert: On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

1750

The Speaker: I certainly did not hear it. If there was something unparliamentary, will the member withdraw it?

Mr Faubert: If "bullchips" is unparliamentary, I shall withdraw it. How about that one?

The Speaker: Order. Thanks for your help. I do not need it.

I heard another unparliamentary word. Will the member for Welland-Thorold withdraw it?

Mr Kormos: Is that the "horse's ass" one, Mr Speaker? If that is the one, I withdraw it, sir.

Mr Runciman: I want to put on the record that the member for Welland-Thorold was not referring to me; not during this debate anyway.

In the brief period of time I have left, I want to talk again about the process. I have been talking about the Liberal members of the committee, about the way they failed to perform on this committee in a fashion that was in the best interests of their constituents and the people of Ontario, and as I said, the innocent accident victims of the future in this province. They failed miserably.

I also want to talk again about some of the things that happened, sort of what I consider to be a policy of deception, a policy of deceit, a policy of coverup on behalf of this Liberal government with respect to the way it dealt with this committee. I talked about the studies that were filed, that were tabled with the committee on the last day of public hearings. I think the number was 39 actuarial studies, many of which the government had in its hands months before the hearings even began, and they were not made available to that committee until the final day of public hearings, when there were none of the expert witnesses, the economists, etc, who had appeared before us, people who were very knowledgeable. Actuaries, economists, who could have critically analysed those and made an important contribution to the debate were just simply shut out, as were members of the committee.

Another element of interest, I think, certainly to the public if not to the Liberal backbenchers, is the fact that the government requested preliminary rate filings based on Bill 68 by December 1989, and complete rate filings by the end of January

1990. The government, while the committee was meeting, had in its hands the filings from the insurance industry telling it what this bill was going to cost consumers in the province.

They did not make it available to the public. They did not make it available to the committee. I had to file under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act for both the actuarial studies and again for this information. We still have not received all the filings. We finally got an analysis, after the committee hearings were done before we could even look at what the real cost impact was going to be to Ontario consumers. They hid it from us. They had preliminary filings in December and complete filings in January. The committee was meeting in February, and they hid it. They simply did not make it available.

You talk about the actuarial studies, you talk about those rate filings and then you talk about the amendments they brought in, after the committee was done deliberating. We talk about the increase in weekly benefits, for example. When was the decision made to do that, Mr Speaker? I ask you, when was the decision made? All the evidence clearly indicates that decision was made before the committee even started hearings.

We had the president of the brokers' association present a letter dated October 1989, congratulating the government on increasing the weekly benefits and the other changes it announced with great fanfare in March. Then they quickly said: "Oh, this is a typographical error. Somebody made a mistake." I want to say that there was that kind of backroom collusion going on, that kind of effort to keep the public away from the real facts on this issue.

That was the strategy of the government from day one and it continues to be the strategy, to minimize the political damage, the political fallout. It has continued on into this effort to stop the opposition from having a full airing of the concerns that the public has over this piece of legislation. They have essentially restricted the debate to the insurance critic for the New Democratic Party and to myself as the insurance critic for the Conservative Party.

They are not allowing the other members of the opposition—as I said earlier, there are only 30-some of us. We have 94 Liberal members and only 30-some opposition members, and they are not going to give us the opportunity even to present our amendments in a meaningful way.

We have over 20 amendments representing a multitude of concerns out there in the province, from people dealing with concerns about the psychological injuries and the failure of this government to recognize psychological injuries with respect to the threshold, from the head-injured, from all sorts of groups concerned about future innocent accident victims and the fact that this legislation is going to preclude over 95% of innocent accident victims from taking an at-fault driver to court.

That is what this legislation is going to do. They are not going to be able to get compensation. If you are hit in an accident and there is an at-fault driver, you are probably going to be part of that 95% of the Ontario population that is not going to be able to take that at-fault driver to court. The Liberal government does not want you to do it.

Christ, we have to ask—

Mr Breaugh: Whoops.

Mr Runciman: Whoops. We have to ask, why are they doing this? We have to ask, why did they make this decision? Why? Why? Why? The answer is, short-term political gain. At the same time, we have to look at the significant windfall that is accruing to the insurance industry, in the neighbourhood of \$1

billion, a windfall to the insurance industry in one year alone of \$1 billion.

Talking about the elaborate bureaucracy that is going to be established because of this legislation, we are talking about the dispute resolution system that could be the son of rent control. We are talking about six million drivers. We look at the bureaucratic mess. We look at what rent control is costing us now—what is it?—\$40 million or \$50 million a year, a backlog going back two years, and now we are getting into dispute resolution and the millions of taxpayers' dollars that is going to cost us, plus the \$1-billion windfall to the insurance industry, and the fact that when this legislation goes through, if indeed it goes through, 95% of innocent accident victims in this province are not going to have the opportunity, the right, to take the at-fault driver to court. They are not going to have that right. That right is being removed.

I want to say that the government's own actuarial studies show a 47.7% net loss of benefits to Ontarians with this legislation going through, close to a 50% loss in benefits. A 50% loss in benefits; a \$1-billion windfall to the insurance industry; you lose your right to go to court. The people of Ontario should be damn mad about what this Liberal government is doing to all of us.

We, with our limited numbers in opposition, have an obligation to make sure that we do the best job we possibly can to get the message out, so that more and more people begin to understand what the implications of this legislation are. The reality is that most of us believe we are never going to be in a car accident, but when it does occur, when it happens to you or a member of your family or a close friend, then you are going to reap the whirlwind of this Liberal government's actions in bringing in this kind of no-fault legislation which is going to eliminate close to 50% of your benefits. You are not going to see any reduction in your premiums, but you are going to lose close to half your benefits, you are going to lose your right to sue in most instances and you are going to give the insurance industry one billion bucks in just one year.

If the people of Ontario start to understand that, those three few basic facts, then perhaps these folks are going to start to feel the heat. The Liberal backbenchers who are not prepared to stand up and speak out maybe are going to start to feel the heat. Maybe the people in their ridings, not just their own Liberal riding associations, are going to demand that they do something about this legislation.

If they stand up in the House, and not be sheeplike, not be simple rubber-stampers, but have the intestinal fortitude to stand up, they can be proud of their legislative careers, proud that they took a stand on behalf of their constituents, that they were not here simply in their own interests, looking forward to political gain, political promotion, looking forward to the executive council and the extra bucks, the chauffeur-driven limousine that goes along with it, the access to all the perks, the expense account at taxpayers' expense.

Those are the overriding concerns of those Liberal members, apparently. They are more concerned about political gain and their own futures than they are about standing up and representing their constituents, and as I said, most importantly, the innocent accident victims in this province in the future, if indeed this legislation goes through.

It is shameful indeed. I have remarked on occasion that it is difficult to comprehend, when you look across the aisle and you do not see these Liberal members being ashamed, you do not see them expressing regret.

What we get are catcalls in here, efforts to impede the debate. What we get is no meaningful input, not one of them prepared to stand up and talk about this legislation. What we get is an attempt to cut off the opposition, to restrict it to two members of the opposition to have meaningful input into this debate. The 30-some members of the opposition who represent thousands of people in Ontario are not going to have an opportunity. All those interested citizens who want their amendments put on the floor and fully debated are not going to have that opportunity afforded to them because the government, the Liberal government says, "We're only going to give you two days in committee of the whole," to talk about what is perhaps the most important legislation to face this assembly in a number of years.

Mr Brandt: Unconscionable.

Mr Runciman: It is indeed unconscionable, but there is no sense of embarrassment across there, no regret. I think the people of Ontario better understand what kind of group they are dealing with, with respect to this very, very arrogant Liberal government.

The arrogance has rippled back into the back benches and we have the member for Sudbury telling his own executive to mind its own business: "I am the member. You have nothing to say to me."

The Speaker: Order. Perhaps the member may look at the clock before anything bursts and he may want to move the adjournment.

On motion by Mr Runciman, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1802

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

(130 seats)

Second Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|--|
| Adams, Peter | Peterborough | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment |
| Allen, Richard | Hamilton West | NDP | |
| Ballinger, William G. | Durham-York | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Beer, Hon Charles | York North | L | Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs |
| Black, Hon Kenneth H. | Muskoka-Georgian Bay | L | Minister of Tourism and Recreation, minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Bossy, Maurice L. | Chatham-Kent | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Bradley, Hon James J. | St Catharines | L | Minister of the Environment |
| Brandt, Andrew S. | Sarnia | PC | Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party |
| Breaugh, Michael J. | Oshawa | NDP | First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Brown, Michael A. | Algoma-Manitoulin | L | |
| Bryden, Marion | Beaches-Woodbine | NDP | |
| Callahan, Robert V. | Brampton South | L | |
| Campbell, Sterling | Sudbury | L | |
| Caplan, Hon Elinor | Oriole | L | Minister of Health |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. | Oakville South | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Charlton, Brian A. | Hamilton Mountain | NDP | |
| Chiarelli, Robert | Ottawa West | L | |
| Cleary, John C. | Cornwall | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Collins, Hon Shirley | Wentworth East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for disabled persons |
| Conway, Hon Sean G. | Renfrew North | L | Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities, Minister of Skills Development |
| Cooke, David R. | Kitchener | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Citizenship |
| Cooke, David S. | Windsor-Riverside | NDP | House leader |
| Cordiano, Joseph | Lawrence | L | |
| Cousens, W. Donald | Markham | PC | |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. | London North | PC | |
| Cureatz, Sam L. | Durham East | PC | Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Curling, Alvin | Scarborough North | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Daigeler, Hans | Nepean | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Revenue |
| Dietsch, Michael M. | St Catharines-Brock | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour |
| Eakins, John F. | Victoria-Haliburton | L | |
| Edighoffer, Hon Hugh A. | Perth | L | Speaker |
| Elliot, R. Walter | Halton North | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Housing |
| Elston, Hon Murray J. | Bruce | L | Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Financial Institutions |
| Epp, Herbert A. | Waterloo North | L | |
| Eves, Ernie L. | Parry Sound | PC | House leader |
| Farnan, Michael | Cambridge | NDP | |
| Faubert, Frank | Scarborough-Ellesmere | L | |
| Fawcett, Joan M. | Northumberland | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Skills Development |
| Ferraro, Rick E. | Guelph | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Financial Institutions |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|---|
| Fleet, David | High Park-Swansea | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Fontaine, Hon René | Cochrane North | L | Minister of Northern Development |
| Fulton, Ed | Scarborough East | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation |
| Furlong, Allan W. | Durham Centre | L | |
| Grandmaître, Bernard C. | Ottawa East | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health |
| Grier, Ruth A. | Etobicoke-Lakeshore | NDP | |
| Haggerty, Ray | Niagara South | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| Hampton, Howard | Rainy River | NDP | |
| Harris, Michael D. | Nipissing | PC | |
| Hart, Hon Christine E. | York East | L | Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Henderson, D. James | Etobicoke-Humber | L | Parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for the provincial anti-drug strategy |
| Hošek, Chaviva | Oakwood | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet |
| Jackson, Cameron | Burlington South | PC | |
| Johnson, Jack | Wellington | PC | |
| Johnston, Richard F. | Scarborough West | NDP | |
| Kanter, Ron | St Andrew-St Patrick | L | |
| Kerrio, Vincent G. | Niagara Falls | L | |
| Keyes, Kenneth A. | Kingston and The Islands | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education |
| Kormos, Peter | Welland-Thorold | NDP | |
| Kozyra, Taras B. | Port Arthur | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Northern Development |
| Kwinter, Hon Monte | Wilson Heights | L | Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology |
| Laughren, Floyd | Nickel Belt | NDP | |
| LeBourdais, Linda | Etobicoke West | L | |
| Leone, Laureano | Downsview | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Culture and Communications |
| Lipsett, Ron | Grey | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy |
| Lupusella, Tony | Dovercourt | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Government Services |
| MacDonald, Keith | Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings | L | |
| Mackenzie, Bob | Hamilton East | NDP | |
| Mahoney, Steven W. | Mississauga West | L | |
| Mancini, Hon Remo | Essex South | L | Minister of Revenue |
| Marland, Margaret | Mississauga South | PC | |
| Martel, Shelley | Sudbury East | NDP | |
| Matrundola, Gino | Willowdale | L | |
| McCague, George R. | Simcoe West | PC | |
| McClelland, Carman | Brampton North | L | |
| McGuigan, James F. | Essex-Kent | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| McLean, Allan K. | Simcoe East | PC | |
| McLeod, Hon Lyn | Fort William | L | Minister of Energy, Minister of Natural Resources |
| Miclash, Frank | Kenora | L | |
| Miller, Gordon I. | Norfolk | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation |
| Morin, Hon Gilles E. | Carleton East | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Morin-Strom, Karl E. | Sault Ste Marie | NDP | |
| Neumann, David E. | Brantford | L | |
| Nicholas, Cindy | Scarborough Centre | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Solicitor General |
| Nixon, J. Bradford | York Mills | L | |
| Nixon, Hon Robert F. | Brant-Haldimand | L | Deputy Premier, Treasurer of Ontario, Minister of Economics |
| Oddie Munro, Lily | Hamilton Centre | L | |
| Offer, Hon Steven | Mississauga North | L | Solicitor General |
| O'Neil, Hon Hugh P. | Quinte | L | Minister of Mines |
| O'Neill, Yvonne | Ottawa-Rideau | L | |

| Name | Constituency | Party | Other responsibilities |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|---|
| Owen, Bruce | Simcoe Centre | L | |
| Patten, Hon Richard | Ottawa Centre | L | Minister of Correctional Services |
| Pelissero, Harry E. | Lincoln | L | |
| Peterson, Hon David R. | London Centre | L | Premier, President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Philip, Ed | Etobicoke-Rexdale | NDP | |
| Phillips, Hon Gerry | Scarborough-Agincourt | L | Minister of Labour |
| Poirier, Jean | Prescott and Russell | L | Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House |
| Pollock, Jim | Hastings-Peterborough | PC | |
| Polsinelli, Claudio | Yorkview | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General |
| Poole, Dianne | Eglinton | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs |
| Pope, Alan W. | Cochrane South | PC | |
| Pouliot, Gilles | Lake Nipigon | NDP | |
| Rae, Bob | York South | NDP | Leader of the Official Opposition |
| Ramsay, Hon David | Timiskaming | L | Minister of Agriculture and Food |
| Ray, Michael C. | Windsor-Walkerville | L | |
| Reville, David | Riverdale | NDP | Chief whip |
| Reycraft, Douglas R. | Middlesex | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Treasurer and Minister of Economics |
| Riddell, Jack | Huron | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources |
| Roberts, Marietta L. D. | Elgin | L | |
| Runciman, Robert W. | Leeds-Grenville | PC | |
| Ruprecht, Tony | Parkdale | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services |
| Scott, Hon Ian G. | St George-St David | L | Attorney General |
| Smith, David W. | Lambton | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Correctional Services |
| Smith, E. Joan | London South | L | Chief government whip |
| Sola, John | Mississauga East | L | |
| Sorbara, Hon Gregory S. | York Centre | L | Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations |
| South, Larry | Frontenac-Addington | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Mines |
| Sterling, Norman W. | Carleton | PC | |
| Stoner, Norah | Durham West | L | Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities |
| Sullivan, Barbara | Halton Centre | L | |
| Sweeney, Hon John | Kitchener-Wilmot | L | Minister of Housing and Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Tatham, Charlie | Oxford | L | |
| Velshi, Murad | Don Mills | L | |
| Villeneuve, Noble | Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry | PC | Chief whip |
| Ward, Hon Christopher C. | Wentworth North | L | Minister of Government Services, government House leader |
| Wildman, Bud | Algoma | NDP | |
| Wilson, Hon Mavis | Dufferin-Peel | L | Minister without Portfolio responsible for women's issues |
| Wiseman, Douglas J. | Lanark-Renfrew | PC | |
| Wong, Hon Robert C. | Fort York | L | Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for the Ontario Human Rights Commission, minister responsible for multiculturalism, minister responsible for race relations |
| Wrye, Hon William | Windsor-Sandwich | L | Minister of Transportation |
| Vacant | Ottawa South | | |

COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Standing Committees

Administration of justice: chair, Mr Chiarelli; vice-chair, Mr McClelland; members, Messrs D. R. Cooke, Hampton, Kanter, Kormos, Miss Nicholas, Messrs Polsinelli, Runciman, D. W. Smith and Sterling; clerk, Douglas Arnott.

Estimates: chair, Mr McCague; vice-chair, Mr Cousens; members, Messrs Charlton, Cleary, Henderson, Matrundola, Miclash, Philip, Miss Roberts, Mrs. E. J. Smith and Mr Villeneuve; clerk, Harold Brown.

Finance and economic affairs: chair, Mr Mahoney; vice-chair, Mr Faubert; members, Mrs Cunningham, Messrs Daigeler, Ferraro, Haggerty, Ms Hošek, Messrs Mackenzie, McLean, Morin-Strom and Reycraft; clerk, Lisa Freedman.

General government: chair, Mr Pelissero; vice-chair, Mrs LeBourdais; members, Ms Bryden, Messrs Carrothers, Charlton, Furlong, McGuigan, J. B. Nixon, Runciman, Velshi and Wiseman; clerk, Franco Carrozza.

Government agencies: chair, Mr Sterling; vice-chair, Mr McLean; members, Messrs Breaugh, Farnan, Fulton, Kozyra, Lupusella, J. B. Nixon, Owen, Pope and South; clerk, Harold Brown.

Legislative Assembly: chair, Mr Epp; vice-chair, Mr M. C. Ray; members, Messrs Breaugh, Brown, Campbell, Cureatz, Eakins, Farnan, J. M. Johnson, Kerrio and Mrs Sullivan; clerk, Deborah Deller.

Ombudsman: chair, Mr Velshi; vice-chair, Mr Kanter; members, Mr Bossy, Ms Bryden, Messrs Carrothers, D. R. Cooke, Cousens, Henderson, MacDonald, Philip and Pollock; clerk, Franco Carrozza.

Public accounts: chair, Mr Philip; vice-chair, Mr Pouliot; members, Messrs Adams, Ballinger, Cordiano, Cousens, Curling, Harris, Leone, Miss Martel and Ms Poole; clerk, Tannis Manikel.

Regulations and private bills: chair, Mr Callahan; members, Messrs Bossy, Jackson, Kanter, MacDonald, Mackenzie, Morin-Strom, Ms Oddie Munro, Messrs Pollock, Ruprecht and Tatham; clerk, Lisa Freedman.

Resources development: chair, Mr Laughren; vice-chair, Mr Mackenzie; members, Messrs Dietsch, Fleet, Harris, Lipsett, Mrs Marland, Messrs Miller, Riddell, Sola and Wildman; clerk, Lynn Mellor.

Social development: chair, Mrs O'Neill; vice-chair, Mrs Fawcett; members, Mr Allen, Mrs Cunningham, Messrs Elliot, Grandmaître, Jackson, Neumann, R. F. Johnston, Keyes and Mrs Stoner; clerk, Todd Decker.

Select Committees

Constitutional and intergovernmental affairs: chair, Mr Furlong; members, Messrs Allen, Breaugh, Epp, Eves, Grandmaître, Harris, Ms Hošek, Ms Oddie Munro, Mr Polsinelli and Miss Roberts; clerk, Deborah Deller.

Education: chair, Mr Campbell; vice-chair, Mr Miclash; members, Messrs D. S. Cooke, Furlong, Jackson, R. F. Johnston, Keyes, Mahoney, Mrs Marland, Mrs O'Neill and Ms Poole; clerk, Tannis Manikel.

Energy: chair, Mrs Sullivan; vice-chair, Mr Brown; members, Messrs Callahan, Charlton, D. R. Cooke, Cureatz, Mrs Grier, Messrs Kerrio, McGuigan, Pollock and M. C. Ray; clerk, Todd Decker.

Special Committee

Parliamentary precinct: co-chairs, Hon Mr Edighoffer and Mr Epp; members, Mr Pouliot, Mrs Smith and Mr Villeneuve; clerk, Smirle Forsyth.

CONTENTS

Thursday 3 May 1990

Private members' public business

| | | | |
|---|------|--------------------------------------|------|
| Commercial rent protection, resolution 1 | 1011 | Chlorofluorocarbons | 1029 |
| Ms Bryden | 1011 | Mr Charlton | 1029 |
| Mr Sterling | 1012 | RIDE program | 1029 |
| Mr Carrothers | 1013 | Mr Sterling | 1029 |
| Mr Morin-Strom | 1014 | Chlorofluorocarbons | 1029 |
| Mr Charlton | 1014 | Mrs Marland | |
| Mr Velshi | 1015 | Mr Villeneuve | |
| Negated | 1024 | | |
| Construction site washroom facilities, resolution 43 . . | 1017 | | |
| Ms Oddie Munro | 1017 | | |
| Mr Mackenzie | 1018 | | |
| Mr Sterling | 1019 | | |
| Mrs O'Neill | 1020 | | |
| Mr Charlton | 1020 | | |
| Mr Dietsch | 1021 | | |
| Mr Fleet | 1021 | | |
| Agreed to | 1024 | | |

Members' statements

| | | | |
|--|------|---|------|
| Municipal finances | 1025 | Child abuse | 1030 |
| Mr Allen | | Mr Kormos | |
| Patricia Starr inquiry | 1025 | Mr Scott | |
| Mr Sterling | | Landfill sites | 1030 |
| David Smith | 1025 | Mr Reville | |
| Mr Owen | | Mr Bradley | |
| Diabetes | 1025 | Assisted housing | 1031 |
| Mr Hampton | | Mr Brandt | |
| Automobile insurance | 1025 | Mr Sweeney | |
| Mr McCague | | Violence against women | 1032 |
| Cycling safety | 1026 | Mrs Marland | |
| Mr Dietsch | | Mrs Wilson | |
| Thorold and Welland students | 1026 | Occupational health and safety | 1033 |
| Mr Kormos | | Mr Mackenzie | |
| Developing Countries Farm Radio Network | 1026 | Mr Phillips | |
| Mr Villeneuve | | Municipal election investigation | 1034 |
| Soviet theatre students | 1026 | Mr McLean | |
| Mr Carrothers | | Mr Offer | |

Statements by the ministry

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------|--|------|
| Mining industry | 1027 | Northern power development | 1034 |
| Mr O'Neill | | Mr Miclash | |
| RIDE program | 1027 | Mrs McLeod | |
| Mr Offer | | Social Assistance Review Committee report | 1035 |
| Chlorofluorocarbons | 1028 | Mr Allen | |
| Mr Bradley | | Mr Beer | |
| | | Canadian Paraplegic Association | 1035 |
| | | Mrs Marland | |
| | | Mr Beer | |
| | | Prescription drugs | 1036 |
| | | Mr Owen | |
| | | Mrs Caplan | |
| | | Pension reform | 1036 |
| | | Mr Morin-Strom | |
| | | Mr Elston | |
| | | Correctional facilities | 1037 |
| | | Mr Cureatz | |
| | | Mr Patten | |
| | | Assistance to released inmates | 1037 |
| | | Mr Adams | |
| | | Mr Patten | |

Responses

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|------|--|------|
| Mining industry | 1028 | Motions | |
| Mr Laughren | | Standing Committee on estimates | 1038 |
| RIDE program | 1028 | Mr Ward | 1038 |
| Mr Kormos | | Agreed to | 1038 |

| | | | |
|---|------|---|------|
| Private members' public business | 1038 | Adjourned | 1051 |
| Mr Ward | 1038 | | |
| Mr D. S. Cooke | 1038 | | |
| Mr Sterling | 1039 | Other business | |
| Mr Eves | 1041 | | |
| Agreed to | 1041 | Visitors | 1029 |
| | | The Speaker | |
| Government motion | | Business of the House | 1041 |
| | | Mr Ward | |
| Time allocation, motion 30 | 1041 | Adjournment | 1051 |
| Mr Runciman | | Alphabetical list of members | 1052 |

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